This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

HARVARD COLLEGE
LIBRARY

GIVEN IN MEMORY OF

LIONEL DE JERSEY HARVARD
CLASS OF 1915

KILLED IN ACTION

BOISLEUX-AU-MONT, FRANCE

MARCH 30, 1918

Engraved by

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

LONDON. ROUTLEDGE, WARNE, & ROUTLEDGE, FARRINGDON STREET.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

LONDON:
ROUTLEDGE, WARNE, & ROUTLEDGE,
FARRINGDON STREET.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

WITH

AN ESSAY ON HIS LANGUAGE AND VERSIFICATION,

AND

AN INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE;

TOGETHER WITH

Notes and a Glossary.

BY THOMAS TYRWHITT.

LONDON:
ROUTLEDGE, WARNE, AND ROUTLEDGE,
FARRINGDON STREET.
NEW YORK: 56, WALKER STREET.
1860.

12424.11

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
IN MEMORY OF
LIONEL DE JERSEY HARVARD
CLASS OF 1915
Apr. 28, 1926

LONDON:
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

TO

THE REV. ALEXANDER DYCE,

THIS EDITION OF

THE POETICAL WORKS OF CHAUCER,

IS INSCRIBED,

BY

THE PUBLISHER.

July, 1843.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

THE PREFACE i

Appendix to the Preface ii

(a) An Account of former Editions of the Canterbury Tales . . . iii

(b) A List of MSS. collated, or consulted, with the Abbreviations by which they are cited viii

(c) An Abstract of the Historical Passages of the Life of Chaucer . . ix

AN ESSAY ON THE LANGUAGE AND VERSIFICATION OF CHAUCER . xvi

AN INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE TO THE CANTERBURY TALES . . . xlviii

THE CANTERBURY TALES.

THE PROLOGUE 1

THE KNIGHTES TALE 7

THE MILLERES TALE 24

THE REVES TALE 29

THE COKES TALE 33

THE MAN OF LAWES TALE 34

THE WIF OF BATHES TALE 43

THE FRERES TALE 52

THE SOMPNOURES TALE 55

THE CLERKES TALE 60

THE MARCHANTES TALE 70

THE SQUIERES TALE 79

PAGE

THE FRANKELEINES TALE 84

THE DOCTOURES TALE 91

THE PARDONERES TALE 93

THE SHIPMANNES TALE 98

THE PRIORESSES TALE 102

THE RIME OF SIRE THOPAS 104

THE TALE OF MELIBEUS 106

THE MONKES TALE 120

THE NONNES PREESTES TALE 128

THE SECOND NONNES TALE 133

THE CHANONES YEMANNES TALE 137

THE MANCIPLES TALE 144

THE PERSONES TALE 147

NOTES ON THE CANTERBURY TALES 173

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE 211

TROILUS AND CRESEIDE—BOOK I. 267

BOOK II. 276

„ III. 290

„ IV. 304

„ V. 318

THE COURT OF LOVE 333

THE COMPLAINT OF PITIE 345

OF QUEEN ANNELIDA AND FALSE ARCITE 346

THE ASSEMBLY OF FOULES 349

THE COMPLAINT OF THE BLACK KNIGHT 355

CHAUCER'S A. B. C. 361

THE BOOKE OF THE DUTCHESSE 363

PAGE

THE HOUSE OF FAME

BOOK I. 373

" II. 376

" III. 381

CHAUCER'S DREAM 389

THE FLOWER AND THE LEAF 405

THE LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN 410

THE LEGENDE OF CLEOPATRAS, QUEENE OF EGYPT 414

THE LEGEND OF TISBE OF BABILON 415

THE LEGEND OF DIDO, QUEENE OF CARTAGE 417

THE LEGEND OF HIPSIPHILE AND MEDEA 420

THE LEGEND OF LUCRECE OF ROME 422

THE LEGEND OF ARIADNE OF ATHENS 424

THE LEGEND OF PHILOMENE 426

THE LEGENDE OF PHILLIS 427

THE LEGENDE OF HYPERMESTRE 429

THE COMPLAINT OF MARS AND VENUS 430

OF THE CUCKOW AND THE NIGHTINGALE 433

MINOR POEMS.

L'ENVOY DE CHAUCER A BUKTON 436

BALADE SENT TO K. RICHARD 436

GOOD COUNSAIL OF CHAUCER 437

A BALLADE OF THE VILLAGE WITHOUT PAINTING 437

L'ENVOY DE CHAUCER. À SCOGAN 438

TO HIS EMPTY PURSE 438

A BALLAD MADE BY CHAUCER, TEACHING WHAT IS GENTILNESS, OR WHOM IS WORTHY TO BE CALLED GENTILL 438

PROVERBES AGAINST COVETISE AND NEGLIGENCE 439

CHAUCER'S WORDS UNTO HIS OWN SCRIVENER 439

VIRELAI 439

GLOSSARY.

PAGE

ADVERTISEMENT CONCERNING THE GLOSSARY 443

AN ACCOUNT OF THE WORKS OF CHAUCER, TO WHICH THE GLOSSARY IS ADAPTED; AND OF THOSE OTHER PIECES WHICH HAVE BEEN IMPROPERLY INTERMIXED WITH HIS IN THE EDITIONS . . . 445

EXPLANATION OF THE ABBREVIATIONS BY WHICH THE WORKS OF CHAUCER AND SOME OTHER BOOKS ARE GENERALLY CITED IN THE FOLLOWING GLOSSARY 451

GLOSSARY 453

WORDS AND PHRASES NOT UNDERSTOOD 502

Inscription

FOR A STATUE OF CHAUCER

AT

WOODSTOCK.

Such was old Chaucer; such the placid mien
Of him who first with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers. Here he dwelt
For many a cheerful day. These ancient walls
Have often heard him, while his legends blithe
He sang; of love, or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life: through each estate and age,
The fashions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand pourtraying. Though perchance
From Blenheim's towers, O stranger, thou art come
Glowing with Churchill's trophies; yet in vain
Dost thou applaud them, if thy breast be cold
To him, this other hero; who, in times
Dark and untaught, began with charming verse
To tame the rudeness of his native land

Akenside.

THE PREFACE.

: first object of this publication was to give the text of THE CANTERBURY TALES as 't as the MSS. within the reach of the Editor would enable him to make it.

: account of former Editions, in the Appendix to this Preface (A), will shew, that this , had hitherto been either entirely neglected, or at least very imperfectly pursued. The r therefore has proceeded as if his author had never been published before. He has d the text throughout from the MSS. and has paid little regard to the readings of any n, except the two by Caxton, each of which may now be considered as a Manuscript. A f the MSS. collated, or consulted, upon this occasion is subjoined (B).

order to make the proper use of these MSS., to unravel the confusions of their orthogra- and to judge between a great number of various readings, it was necessary to enquire he state of our language and versification at the time when Chaucer wrote, and also, as as was possible, into the peculiarities of his style and manner of composition. Nor was necessary to examine with some attention the work now intended to be republished ; to a line between the imperfections, which may be supposed to have been left in it by the r, and those which have crept into it since ; to distinguish the parts where the author rs as an inventor, from those where he is merely a translator, or imitator ; and throughout hole to trace his allusions to a variety of forgotten books and obsolete customs. As a n degree of information upon all these points will be found to be necessary even for the ng of the Canterbury Tales with intelligence and satisfaction, the Editor hopes he shall cused for supposing, that the majority of his readers will not be displeased with his ipt to shorten at least the labour of their enquiries, by laying before them such parts of esult of his own researches, as he judges will be most conducive to that purpose. He has fore added to the text, 1. AN ESSAY[a] ON THE LANGUAGE AND VERSIFICATION OF CER ; 2. AN INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE TO THE CANTERBURY TALES ; and 3. NOTES,

this ESSAY, Part the third, §. 1—6. is contained a short view of English Poetry to the time of Chaucer, the of compiling which the Editor might perhaps have saved himself, if he had foreseen, that Mr. Warton's Y OF ENGLISH POETRY would have appeared so soon. Both the *Essay* and the *Introductory Discourse* were l before Mr. Warton's book was published ; which is mentioned, not so much to obviate any suspicion of rism, as to apologise for whatever defects there may be in either of those treatises, from a want of the lights that learned and elegant writer has thrown upon all parts of this subject.

into which he has thrown an account of the most material various readings; illustrations of particular passages; and explanations of the most uncommon words and phrases, especially such as are omitted, or ill explained, in the Glossary to Urry's Edition.

He had once an intention of adding a Glossary*, and a Life of Chaucer. From the former of these undertakings he was deterred by the bulk to which this publication had already swollen, and by the consideration that a Glossary, adapted to a part only of Chaucer's writings, must necessarily be a very imperfect work, the utility of which would by no means be proportionable to the labour employed in compiling it. If this attempt, to invite the attention of the public to their too much neglected bard, should so far succeed as to bring to light any MSS. by the help of which, together with those in the Bodleian and other Libraries, the remainder of the writings of Chaucer might be restored to a tolerable degree of purity, a good Glossary to the whole would be a most useful work, and indeed would answer all the purposes of a Dictionary of our antient Language.

With respect to a life of Chaucer, he found, after a reasonable waste of time and pains in searching for materials, that he coud add few *facts* to those, which have already appeared in several lives of that poet; and he was not disposed, either to repeat the comments and inventions, by which former biographers have endeavoured to supply the deficiency of facts, or to substitute any of his own for the same laudable purpose. Instead therefore of a formal life of his author, which, upon these principles, must have been a very meagre narration, he has added to this Preface (c) a short ABSTRACT OF THE HISTORICAL PASSAGES OF THE LIFE OF CHAUCER, with remarks, which may serve to separate for the future those passages from others, which have nothing to recommend them to credit, but the single circumstance of having been often repeated.

He will detain the reader no longer than just to observe, that in the following edition of the Canterbury Tales he does not recollect to have deviated from the MSS. (except, perhaps, by adding the final *n* to a very few words) in any one instance, of which the reader is not advertised in the notes.

[* This intention the learned Editor afterwards carried into execution, and published a Glossary in 1778.]

APPENDIX TO THE PREFACE.

(A) AN ACCOUNT OF FORMER EDITIONS OF THE CANTERBURY TALES.

The Art of Printing had been invented and exercised for a considerable time, in most countries of Europe, before the Art of Criticism was called in to superintend and direct its operations. It is therefore much more to the honour of our meritorious countryman William Caxton, that he chose to make the Canterbury Tales one of the earliest productions of his press, than it can be to his discredit, that he printed them very incorrectly. He probably took the first MS. that he coud procure to print from, and it happened unluckily to be one of the worst in all respects that he coud possibly have met with. The very few copies of this Edition, which are now remaining[a], have no date, but Mr. Ames supposes it to have been printed in 1475 or 6.

It is still more to the honour of Caxton, that when he was informed of the imperfections of his edition, he very readily undertook a second, "for to satisfy the author," (as he says himself,) "whereas tofore by ignorance *he* had erred in hurting and diffaming his book." His whole account of this matter, in the Preface to this second Edition, is so clear and ingenuous, that I shall insert it below in his own words[b]. This Edition is also without date, except that the Preface informs us, that it was printed six years after the first.

---

[a] The late Mr. West was so obliging as to lend me a complete copy of this Edition, which is now, as I have heard, in the King's Library. There is another complete copy in the Library of Merton College, which is illuminated, and has a ruled line under every printed one, to give it the appearance, I suppose, of a MS. Neither of these books, though seemingly complete, has any Preface or Advertisement.

[b] Pref. to Caxton's 2d Edit. from a copy in the Library of St. John's Coll. Oxford. *Ames*, p. 55.—Whiche book I have dylygently oversen, and duly examyned to the ende that it be made accordyng unto his owen makyng; for I fynde many of the sayd bookes, whiche wryters have abrydgyd it, and many thynges left out, and in some places have sette certayn versys that he never made ne sette in hys booke; of whyche bookes so incorrecte was one broughte to me vi. yere passyd, whiche I supposed had ben veray true and correcte, and accordyng to the same I dyde do enprynte a certayn nomber of them, whyche anon were solde to many and dyverse gentyl men, of whom one gentylman cam to me, and sayd that this book was not according in many places unto the book that Gefferey Chaucer had made. To whom I answered, that I had made it accordyng to my copye, and by me was nothyng added ne mynushyd. Thenne he sayd, he knewe a book whyche hys fader had and moche lovyd, that was very trewe, and accordyng unto hys owen first book by hym made; and sayd more, yf I wold enprynte it agayn, he wold gete me the same book for a copye. How be it he wyst well that hys fader wold not gladly departe fro it. To whom I said, in caas that he coude gete me suche a book, trewe and correcte, yet I wold ones endevoyre me to enprynte it agayn, for to satisfy the auctour, where as tofore by ygnorauncе I erryd in hurtyng and dyffamyng his book in dyverce places, in setting in somme thynges that he never sayd ne made, and leving out many thynges that he made, whyche ben requysite to be sette in it. And thus we fyll at accord, and he full gentylly gate of hys fader the said book, and delyvered it to me, by whiche I have corrected my book, as heere after alle alonge by the ayde of almighty God shal folowe, whom I humbly beseche, &c.

Ames mentions an Edition of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, "Collected by William Caxton, and printed by Wynken de Worde at Westmestre, in 1495. Folio." He does not appear to have seen it himself, nor have I ever met with any other authority for its existence; which however I do not mean to dispute. If there was such an Edition, we may be tolerably sure, that it was only a copy of Caxton's.

This was certainly the case of both Pynson's Editions. He has prefixed to both the introductory part of Caxton's Prohemye to his 2d Edition, without the least alteration. In what follows, he says, that he purposes to imprint his book [in the first Edition] *by a copy of the said Master Caxton*, and [in the second] *by a copy of William Caxton's imprinting*[c]. That the Copy, mentioned in both these passages, by which Pynson purposed to imprint, was really Caxton's second Edition, is evident from the slightest comparison of the three books. Pynson's first Edition has no date, but is supposed (upon good grounds, I think) to have been printed not long after 1491, the year of Caxton's death. His second Edition[d] is dated in 1526, and was the first in which a Collection of some other pieces of Chaucer was added to the Canterbury Tales.

The next Edition, which I have been able to meet with, was printed by Thomas Godfray in 1532. If this be not the very Edition which Leland speaks of[e] as printed by Berthelette, with

Mr. Lewis in his Life of Caxton, p. 104, has published a minute account of the contents of this edition from a copy in the Library of Magdalen College, Cambridge, but without deciding whether it is the first or the second edition.

It is undoubtedly the second; but the Preface is lost. There is an imperfect copy of this edition in the Museum, and another in the Library of the Royal Society. Both together would not make a complete one.

[c] See the *Prohemies* to Pynson's 1st and 2d Editt. in the Preface to Urry's Chaucer. There is a complete copy of Pynson's 1st Edit. in the Library of the Royal Society.

[d] I venture to call this Pynson's 2d Edit. though Ames (from some notes of Bagford) speaks of Editions in 1520 and 1522. He does not appear to have seen them himself. Mr. West had a copy of the Edition of 1526, in which the name of the printer and the date of the impression are regularly set down at the end of the Canterbury Tales. After that follow "*Troilus and Crescide*" and "*The Boke of Fame*," at the end of which last is a note, copied from Caxton's edition of the same book, with this addition, *And here foloweth another of his workes*. But in Mr. West's copy nothing followed. The writer of the Preface to Ed. Urr. seems to have had the use of a copy of this Edition in 1526, which contained some other pieces of Chaucer's, and several by other hands. See the Pref. to Ed. Urr.

[e] I think it necessary to state Leland's account of the editions of Chaucer in his own words, from Tanner's *Bibl Brit.* v. Chaucer. "Non alienum meo erit instituto palam facere, *Gulielmum Caxodunum*, hominem nec indiligentem nec indoctum, et quem constat primum Londini artem exercuisse typographicam, *Chauceri* opera, quotquot vel pretio vel precibus comparare potuit, *in unum volumen collegisse*. Vicit tamen Caxodunicam editionem *Bertholetus* noster operâ *Gulielmi Thynni*, qui multo labore, sedulitate, ac curâ usus in perquirendis vetustis exemplaribus, multa *primæ* adjecit *editioni*. Sed nec in hac parte caruit *Brianus Tucca*, mihi familiaritate conjunctissimus, et Anglicæ linguæ eloquentiâ mirificus, suâ gloriâ, editâ in postremam impressionem *præfatione* elimatâ, luculentâ, eleganti. Sequar igitur codicem *paucis abhinc annis* impressum, et promissum adponam syllabon." He then gives a Syllabus of the works of Chaucer, contained in that Edition, as follows: "*Fabulæ Cantianæ* xxiv, quarum duæ solutâ oratione scriptæ; sed *Petri Aratoris fabula*, quæ communi doctorum consensu Chaucero, tanquam vero parenti, attribuitur, in utrâque editione, quia malos sacerdotum mores vehementer increpavit, suppressa est. *De arte amandi* alias *Romaunce of the Rose*," &c.

Before I make any remarks upon this account, I must observe that it was drawn up by Leland before the year 1540. This appears from his "New Year's gift to Henry VIII. in the xxxvii yeare of his raygne," (1 Jan. 1546.) in which he says expressly, that he had spent the last six years in travelling about the kingdom, "all his other occupations intermitted." [Ed. 1745. p. xxii. prefixed to Leland's Itin. v. i.] so that his book *De Viris illustribus*, which he speaks of as finished in the same piece, p. xxi. must have been finished before he set out upon his travels. I will observe too, by the way, that the Biographers of Leland seem to have confounded these last six years travels with his former travels, in execution of the Commission granted to him by Henry VIII. to serche the Libraries of Monasteries, Colleges, &c. That Commission was granted in the year 1533, 25 H. VIII. but how many years he spent in the execution of it, there is no authority, that I can find, for determining with precision.

In the account above-quoted, Leland is certainly mistaken in saying that Caxton *collected* the works of Chaucer *into one volume*. He printed two Editions of the Canterbury Tales by themselves, as has been shewn above. He also

the assistance of Mr. William Thynne, (as I rather suspect it is,) we may be assured that it was copied from that. Mr. Thynne's Dedication to Henry VIII. stands at the head of it; and the great number of Chaucer's works, never before published, which appear in it, fully

printed Boethius, Troilus and Cressida, and the Boke of Fame; but each in a separate volume; and some smaller pieces of Chaucer, intermixed with several of Lydgate, &c. in another volume, of which the contents may be seen in Middleton's Dissert. p. 263. n. [*d*]; but it does not appear that he ever attempted to collect these separate publications into one volume.

Leland is also inaccurate, at least, in representing the edition by Thynne as coming next after that by Caxton, without taking any notice of the intermediate editions by Pynson, and especially that in 1526, in which an attempt was really made to collect the works of Chaucer into one volume.

It may appear presumptuous to go further, and to charge him with inaccuracy in his description of that very edition by Thynne, which he seems to have had before his eyes, but I am much inclined to suspect, (as I have intimated in the text,) that the edition which he speaks of as printed by Berthelette was really printed by Godfray, and that the Preface of *Brianus Tucca* (Sir Brian Tuke) which he commends so much, was nothing else but the Prefatory address, or Dedication, to the King, which is prefixed to Godfray's and other later editions in the name of Mr. William Thynne. The mistake may not have been so extravagant, as it appears to be at first. It is possible, that Berthelette might be concerned in putting forth the edition of 1532, though it was printed by Godfray; and it is very probable, that the Dedication, (which is in such a style as I think very likely to be commended by Leland,) though standing in the name of Mr. William Thynne, was composed for him by Sir Brian Tuke. Mr. Thynne himself, I apprehend, was rather a lover, than a master, of these studies.

In support of this suspicion I observe, 1. that the syllabus, which Leland has given of the contents of Berthelette's edition, agrees exactly enough with the contents of the edition by Godfray, a few small pieces only being omitted by him. 2. The date of Godfray's Edition in 1532 agrees perfectly with what Leland says of the edition in question, (viz. that it was printed *a few years before*,) and with the probable date of Mr. Thynne's edition, which appears to have been published not earlier than 1530, and certainly not later than 1532. It was not published earlier than 1530, because *the French Grammar made by an Englishman*, mentioned in the Dedication, must mean, in all probability, *l'eclaircisement de la langue Françoise* by John Palsgrave, the printing of which was finished by John Hawkins, xviii July, 1530, and the Privilege granted on the 2 September following. It was not later than 1532, because the Dedication appears in Godfray's edition of that year. 3. If Berthelette had printed Mr. Thynne's edition, in 1531 (we will suppose), it is inconceivable that Godfray should set about another edition so immediately as to be able to publish it the very next year. Though the printers of that age had a very imperfect notion, I apprehend, of Copy-right at Common Law, they may be presumed to have had always a certain Common Sense, which would restrain them from undertaking a new impression of a book, while a considerable number of copies of a former impression remained unsold, whether those copies belonged to themselves or to others. Besides, Godfray's edition has no appearance of a hasty, piratical impression. It is upon a fine paper, and the types and presswork are remarkably neat and elegant. 4. I think we have Berthelette's own authority for believing that he did not print Mr. Thynne's edition of Chaucer. In the preface to Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, which he published in this very year 1532, after having mentioned *Troylus and Cresepde*, he goes on thus: "The whiche noble warke and many other of the sayde Chausers, that never were before imprinted, and those that very fewe men knewe and fewer hadde them, be now of late put forthe together in a fayre volume." There can be no doubt that in this passage he refers to Mr. Thynne's edition, and if he had printed it himself, I think he would certainly have claimed the honour of it. At the same time, the favourable manner in which he speaks of it, would lead one to imagine, (as has been suggested above,) that he had some concern in it.

Upon the whole therefore I am persuaded, that the edition by Godfray in 1532 is the edition which Leland speaks of as printed by Berthelette I have given above what I conjecture to have been the probable grounds of his mistake. But indeed, when we recollect the hurry in which this work of Leland must have been compiled, and that it was left by him unfinished, we need not seek for any other causes of the inaccuracies with which it abounds. In the latter part of the passage cited above, he speaks of *The Ploughman's Tale* by the title of *Petri Aratoris fabula*, confounding it, in the title at least, with *Pierce Ploughman's Visions*. For I do not suppose that he meant to attribute *the Visions* to Chaucer; though in fact the one might as well be attributed to him as the other.

Notwithstanding the immoderate length of this note, I must not suppress another testimony, which may be produced in favour of the existence of an Edition of Chaucer by Mr. Thynne, distinct from that printed by Godfray. Mr. Speght in his Life of Chaucer has the following passage: "M. William Thynn in his first printed booke of Chaucers works with one columbe on a side, had a Tale called the Pilgrims tale, which was more odious to the Clergie, than the speach of the Plowman. The tale began thus: *In Lincolneshire fast by a fenne: Standeth a religious house who doth it kenne.* The argument of which tale, as also the occasion thereof, and the cause why it was left out of Chaucers works, shall hereafter be shewed, if God permit, in M. Fran. Thyns coment upon Chaucer: and the Tale itselfe published *if possibly it can be found.*"

It must be allowed that this description of Mr. Thynne's first edition, "with *one columne on a side*, and *a tale* called *the Pilgrim's tale*," does not suit the edition printed by Godfray, which is in two columns and has no Pilgrim's tale

entitles it to the commendations, which have always been given to Mr. Thynne's edition on that account. Accordingly, it was several times reprinted as the standard edition of Chaucer's works, without any material alteration, except the insertion of the Plowman's tale in 1542, of which I have spoken in the Discourse, &c. n. 32.

As my business here is solely with the Canterbury Tales, I shall take no notice of the several miscellaneous pieces, by Chaucer and others, which were added to them by Mr. Thynne in his Edition, and afterwards by Stowe and Speght in the Editions of 1561, 1597, and

---

But I observe that Mr. Speght does not pretend to have seen this book. He even doubts whether the tale *can be found*. If therefore I should be able to prove, that the Tale, which he speaks of, coud not possibly be in Mr. Thynne's first edition, I presume no great stress will be laid upon the other part of his evidence, in which he supposes that edition to have been printed with only one columne on a side.

It appears very strange, at first sight, that the Plowman's Tale (according to Leland) should have been suppressed in Mr. Thynne's edition, *quia malos sacerdotum mores vehementer increpavit*, and that he should have inserted this Pilgrim's Tale, which, as Mr. Speght tells us, was still *more odious to the Clergie*. A few years after, when the Reformation was further advanced, in 1542, the Plowman's Tale is inserted among Chaucer's works and the Pilgrim's Tale is suppressed! But there is no occasion to insist upon these little improbabilities. Though Mr. Speght did not know where to find the Pilgrim's Tale, and the Printer of the Edit. in 1687 assures us, that he had searched for it "in the public libraries of both Universities," and also "in all private libraries that he could have access unto," I have had the good fortune to meet with a copy*. It is entitled, "*The Pylgrymse tale*," and begins thus:

In Lincolneshyr fast by the fene
Ther stant an hows and you yt ken,
And callyd sempynham of religion
And is of an old foundation, &c.

There can be no doubt, I think, that this is the piece of which Mr. Speght had received some confused intelligence It seems to have been mentioned by *Bale* among Chaucer's works, in the following manner. "*Narrationes diversorum, Lib. I. In comitatu Lincolniensi fuit*—" *Script. Brit.* p. 526. Ed. 1559. But it is impossible that any one who had read it should ascribe it to Chaucer. He is quoted in it twice by name, fol. xxxiii. and fol. xlv. and in the latter place the reference seems to be made to a printed book. The reader shall judge.—

He sayd he durst not it disclose,
But bad me reyd the Romant of the Rose,
The thred leafe just from the end,
To *the secund page* ther he did me send,
He prayd me thes vi. stavis for to marke,
Whiche be *Chaucers* awn hand wark.
¶ Thus moche woll our boke sygnify
That while Peter hath mastery, &c.

[Then follow four more lines from Chaucer's R. R. v. 7263—8 Ed. Urr.] It is not usual, at least, to cite MSS. by *the leaf* and *the page*. But if this citation was really made from a printed book, the Pilgrim's tale must have been written after Mr. Thynne's edition, for Chaucer's translation of the Romant of the Rose was first printed in that edition. Another passage will fix the date of this composition still more clearly. In fol. xxxix. xl. are the following lines:

Perkin werbek and Jak straw
And now of late *our cobler* the dawe.

One would not expect to find any mention of *Perkin Warbeck* in a work attributed to Chaucer; but, passing that over, I think it is plain, that *our cobler*, in the second line, means the leader of the Lincolnshire rebels in 1536, who, as Hollinshed tells us, p. 941. "called himself *Captaine Cobler*, but was indeed a monk, named Doctor Mackarell." *The Pilgrim's tale* therefore was not written till *after* 1536, and consequently coud not possibly be in Mr. Thynne's first Edition, which, as has been shewn above, was printed *at latest* in 1532.

---

* The copy, of which I speak, is in the black letter, and seems to have once made part of a volume of miscellaneous poems in 8vo. The first leaf is numbered xxxi. and the last xlv. *The Pilgrim's tale* begins about the middle of *fol.* xxxi. *vers.* and continues to the end of the fragment, where it breaks off imperfect. The first leaf has a running title —*Venus The Court of*—and contains the ten last lines of one poem, and another whole poem of twenty lines, before *the Pilgrim's tale*.

This curious fragment was purchased at the Auction of Mr. West's library, in a lot (N° * 1040) of *Sundry fragments of old black-letter books*, by Mr. Herbert of Gulston's Square, who very obligingly permitted me to examine it.

1602. With respect to the Canterbury Tales, I am under a necessity of observing, that, upon the whole, they received no advantage from the edition of 1532. Its material variations from Caxton's *second* edition are all, I think, for the worse. It confounds the order of the *Squier's*[f] and the *Frankelein's*[g] tales, which Caxton, in his *second* Edition, had set right. It gives the *Frankelein's* Prologue to the *Merchant*, in addition to his own proper Prologue[h]. It produces for the first time two Prologues, the one to the *Doctour's*, and the other to the *Shipman's* tale, which are both evidently spurious[i]; and it brings back the lines of ribaldry[k] in the *Merchant's* tale, which Caxton, in his *second* Edition, had rejected upon the authority of his good MS.

However, this Edition of 1532, with all its imperfections, had the luck, as I have said, to be considered as the standard edition, and to be copied, not only by the Booksellers, in their several Editions[l] of 1542, 1546, 1555, and 1561, but also by Mr. Speght, (the first Editor in form, after Mr. Thynne, who set his name to his work,) in 1597 and 1602. In the Dedication to Sir Robert Cecil, prefixed to this last edition, he speaks indeed of having "reformed the whole work, both by old written copies and by Ma. William Thynnes praise-worthy labours," but I cannot find that he has departed in any material point from those editions, which I have supposed to be derived from Mr. Thynne's. In the very material points abovementioned, in which those editions vary from Caxton's second, he has followed *them*. Nor have I observed any such verbal varieties, as would induce one to believe that he had consulted any good MS. They who have read his Preface, will probably not regret, that he did not do more towards correcting the text of Chaucer.

In this state the Canterbury Tales remained[m] till the edition undertaken by Mr. Urry, which was published, some years after his death, in 1721. I shall say but little of that edition, as a very fair and full account of it is to be seen in the modest and sensible Preface prefixed to it by Mr. Timothy Thomas[n], upon whom the charge of publishing Chaucer devolved, or rather

---

f See the Discourse, &c. §. xxiii. and Note on ver. 10293.

g See the Discourse, &c. §. xxv. and Note on ver. 10965.

h See the same Section and Note.

i See them in all the Editt. since 1532.

k See the Note on ver. 10227. The lines themselves are in all the common Editt.

l There are some other Editions mentioned by Ames, without date, but it is probable that, upon inspection, they would appear to be one or other of the Editions, whose dates are here given. It seems to have been usual to print books in partnership, and for each partner to print his own name to his share of the impression. See Ames, p. 252. A Bible is said to be printed in 1551, by Nicholas Hill—"at the cost and charges of certayne honest menne of the occupacyon, *whose names be upon their bokes.*"

m It may be proper just to take notice, that Mr. Speght's Edition was reprinted in 1687, with an Advertisement at the end, in which the Editor pretended to publish from a MS. *the conclusion of* the Coke's Tale *and also of* the Squires Tale, *which in the printed books are said to be lost or never finished by the author.*—These Conclusions may be seen in the Preface to Ed. Urr. Whoever the Editor was, I must do him the justice to say, that they are both really to be found in MS. The first is in MS. B. α. and the other in MS. B. δ. from which Hearne has also printed it, as a choice discovery, in his Letter to Bagford. App. to R. G. p. 601. If I thought the Reader had any relish for such supplements to Chaucer, I coud treat him from MS. B. α. with at least thirty more lines, which have been inserted in different parts of *the Cook's Tale*, by the same hand that wrote this Conclusion. It seems to have been an early, though very unsuccessful, attempt to supply the deficiencies of that Tale, before any one had thought of tacking *Gamelyn* to it.

n I learn this from a MS. note in an interleaved copy of Urry's Chaucer, presented to the British Museum by Mr. William Thomas, a brother, as I apprehend, of Mr. T. Thomas. T. Thomas was of Christ-Church, Oxford, and died in 1751, aged lix. In another note Mr. W. Thomas informs us, that the *Life of Chaucer*, in that edition, was very uncorrectly drawn up by Mr. Dart, and corrected and enlarged by W. T. (i. e. himself.) The same Mr. W. Thomas has taken a great deal of unnecessary pains in collating that copy of Urry's Edit. with several MSS. The best part of the various

was imposed, after Mr. Urry's death. The strange licence, in which Mr. Urry appears to have indulged himself, of lengthening and shortening Chaucer's words according to his own fancy, and of even adding words of his own, without giving his readers the least notice, has made the text of Chaucer in his edition by far the worst that was ever published.

Since this there has been no complete Edition of the Canterbury Tales. A volume in 8vo containing the Prologue and the Knightes Tale, with large explanatory notes, &c. was published in 1737, by a Gentleman, (as I am informed,) who has since distinguished himself by many other learned and useful publications. He appears to have set out upon the only rational plan of publishing Chaucer, by collating the best MSS. and selecting from them the genuine readings; and accordingly his edition, as far as it goes, is infinitely preferable to any of those which preceded it.

(B) A LIST OF MSS. COLLATED, OR CONSULTED, WITH THE ABBREVIATIONS BY WHICH THEY ARE CITED.

IN THE MUSEUM.

A. MS. Harl. 7335.
B. MS. Reg. 18 C. ii. In Urry's List, vii.
C. MS. Harl. 7334.
D. MS. Reg. 17 D. xv. In Urry's List, viii.
E. MS. Harl. 7333.
F. MS. Harl. 1758. In Urry's List, i.
G. MS. Sloane. A. 1685. xxii. D. In Urry's List, iii.
H. MS. Sloane. A. 1686. xxii. D. In Urry's List, iv.
I. MS. Harl. 1239. In Urry's List, ii.

AT OXFORD.

In the *Bodleian* Library.

B. α. No. 2527. in the printed Catalogue.
B. β. No. 1234. Ibid.
B. γ. No. 1476. Ibid.
B. δ. No. 3360. Ibid.
B. ε. No. 4138. Ibid.
B. ζ. No. 6420. Ibid.
N C. A MS. in the Library of *New College*.

AT CAMBRIDGE.

C. 1. In the Public Library. No. D. d. 4. 24.
C. 2. Ibid. No. I. i. 3. 26.
T. MS. in the Library of *Trinity College*, No. R. 3. 3.
T t. Ibid. No. R. 3. 15.
Ask. 1. 2. Two MSS. lent to me by the late Dr. Askew. The second has in it the Arms of Henry Deane, Archbishop of Canterbury. 1501—3.
H A. A MS. lent to me by Edward Haistwell, Esq.
W. A MS. in the possession of the late Mr. P. C. Webb.
Ch. N. Two MSS. described in the Pref. to Ed. Urr. the one as belonging to Charles Cholmondeley, Esq., of Vale Royal, in Cheshire, and the other to Mr. Norton, of Southwick, in Hampshire The Editor quotes them from the Collations of Mr. W. Thomas, mentioned above in this App. A. note *n*.

---

readings serves only to correct the arbitrary innovations, which Mr. Urry had introduced into the text. He has employed himself to better purpose upon the Glossary, where he has made many emendations and additions, which may be of considerable use, if ever a new Glossary to Chaucer shall be compiled.

Of these MSS. the most credit is certainly due to the five following, viz. A C. 1. Ask. 1. 2. and H A. The four last exhibit the Tales in exactly the same order in which they are printed in this edition; and so does A. except that it wants the *Cokes* Tale [See the Discourse, &c. §. xiii.] and has the *Nonnes* Tale inserted between the *Sompnoures* and the *Clerkes*. It is also unluckily very imperfect; beginning only at ver. 1204. and ending (with several intermediate breaks) at ver. 12610. in the *Pardoner's* Tale.

N.B. The Editt. of Chaucer by Caxton and Pynson are cited by these abbreviations; Ca. 1. 2. Pyns. 1. 2.—Sp. and Urr. are put for the Editt. by Speght and Urry.—M. stands for the Edit. of *the Prologue and Knight's Tale* in 1737.—The other Editt. are cited by their respective dates. If no date is mentioned, the reference is to the Edit. of 1542 by John Reyne.

(c) AN ABSTRACT OF THE HISTORICAL PASSAGES OF THE LIFE OF CHAUCER.

THE birth of Chaucer in 1328 has been settled, I suppose, from some inscription on his tomb-stone, signifying that he died in 1400, at the age of 72. Of his birth itself we have no memorial, any more than of his parents[a]. He calls himself a *Londenois*, or *Londoner*, in the *Testament of Love*; B. i. fol. 325. and in another passage, fol. 321. speaks of the city of London as the place of his *engendrure*.

We are more in the dark about the place of his education. In his *Court of Love*, ver. 912. he speaks of himself under the name and character of "Philogenet—*of Cambridge*, Clerk." This is by no means a decisive proof that he was really educated at Cambridge; but it may be admitted, I think, as a strong argument that he was not educated at Oxford; as Leland has supposed, without the shadow of a proof[b]. The Biographers however, instead of weighing one of these accounts against the other, have adopted both; and tell us very gravely, that he was first at Cambridge, and afterwards removed from thence to complete his studies at Oxford.

It were to be wished that Mr. Speght had given us the date of that Record in the Inner Temple, (which he says, a Mr. Buckley had seen,) where "Geffrey Chaucer was fined two shillings for beating a Franciscane frier in Fleet-street[c]." Leland has also told us, that our

[a] Mr. Speght has referred to several Records in which the name of Chaucer occurs. There is mention in the *Monast. Ang.* vol. iii. p. 326. of a *Johannes le Chauser, civis Londoniensis*, an. 1299. who may possibly have been our Poet's Grandfather. Though Leland says, that he was *nobili loco natus*, Mr. Speght informs us, that "in the opinion of some heralds—he descended not of any great house, which they gather by his Armes." I am inclined to believe the Heralds, rather than Leland.

The name of *Chaucer* is explained [Life of Ch. Urr.] to signify *a shoe-maker*; but it rather means *un faiseur de chausses ou culottiers*. Dict. de Lacombe, v. *Chaucier*. According to what is said to be the old spelling of it, *Chaucesir*, it might be not improbably derived from *Chaufecire*, an office, which still subsists under the title of *Chafewax*.

[b] The single circumstance, by which Leland has endeavoured to strengthen his supposition that Chaucer was educated at Oxford, is another supposition that he was born in Oxfordshire or Berkshire. The latter has been shewn above to be false.

[c] Though this be but a blind story, it rather inclines me to believe that Chaucer was of the Inner Temple *in the early part of his life*, before he went into the service of Edward III. The circumstance recorded is plainly a *youthful* sally. On the contrary, Leland supposes his *principal* residence in the Inns of Court to have been *after* he had *flourished* in France, *about the last years* of Richard II.; which is totally incredible. Indeed Leland, through his whole account of our author, seems to have considered him as living at least twenty years later than he really did.

author "*collegia Legulciorum frequentavit* after his travels in France, and perhaps before." I must observe, that these travels in France rest entirely upon the authority of Leland, whose account is full of inconsistencies.

The first authentic memorial, which we have of Chaucer, is the Patent in Rymer, 41 E. III. by which that King grants to him an annuity of 20 marks, by the title of *Valettus noster*[d]. He was then in the 39th year of his age. How long he had served the King in that, or any other, station, and what particular merits were rewarded by this royal bounty[e], are points equally unknown.

He takes no notice of the best authenticated circumstances of Chaucer's life in the time of Edward III. and he represents him as highly esteemed by Henry IV. and HIS SON, *qui de Gallis triumphavit*. Henry V. was scarcely twelve years of age, when Chaucer died.

[d] *Our Yeoman*. Mr. Speght, who omits this grant, mentions one of the same purport in the 45 E. III. in which Chaucer is styled *Valettus Hospitii*, which he translates—*Grome of the Pallace*. By this he sinks our author as much too low as another writer has raised him too high, by translating the same words—*Gentleman of the King's Privy Chamber* [Life of Ch. Urr.]. *Valet*, or *Yeoman*, was the intermediate rank between *Squier* and *Grome*. See the note on ver. 101. See also the Will of Edward Duke of York, *ap. Rymer*, an. 1415. where his legacies *to his menial servants* are thus arranged—a un Escuier L. s. a [un] vadlet XX s. a un garc [on . . .] & a un page VI s. VIII d.

Valettus is probably a corruption of *Vassalettus*, the diminutive of *Vassallus*. Hence this title was also given, not as a name of service, to young men of the highest quality, before they were knighted.

Il ot un fiz de sa mulier
Ki neit pas uncore chivaler,
Vallet esteit et beaus et gent.—*Roman d'Ipomedon.*

So that if Edward III. as Mr. Speght says, "did entitle Laurence Hastings, Lord of Aburganey,—*Valectum nostrum*," I should guess, that the said Lord was *not* "the King's grome, page, or servant," as he supposes, or his yeoman, as Chaucer was, but his *Ward*.

[e] I should have been glad to have met with any ground for supposing, that this mark of Royal favour was a reward of our author's poetical merits. That Chaucer had before this time distinguished himself by his poetical performances, is almost certain. I have mentioned a suspicion [n. on ver. 1920.] that the *Assemblee of Foules* alludes to the Courtship of Blanche of Lancaster by John of Gaunt, who married her in 1359, the 33d year of E. III. And perhaps the *Complaint of the Blacke Knight* might be written for John of Gaunt during the same Courtship. It is still more probable that his Translation of the *Roman de la Rose* and his *Troilus* were both composed before 1367, the æra of which we are speaking. But I think, if the King had really patronised Chaucer as a Poet, we must have found some clear evidence of such a connection. If the one had been fond of verses, the other would certainly have given him some; especially as he might have exerted his genius in the praise of so illustrious a Patron without any necessity of flattering. If we consider further, that, a few years after, the King appointed him to be Comptroller of the Custom of Wool, &c. in the Port of London, with the following injunction in his Patent,—"*So that the said Geffrey write with his own hand his rolls touching the said office, and continually reside there, and do and execute all things pertaining to the said office in his own proper person and not by his substitute*,"—we shall probably be of opinion, that His Majesty was either totally insensible of our author's poetical talents, or at least had no mind to encourage him in the cultivation or exercise of them. It should seem that Edward, though adorned with many Royal and Heroic virtues, had not the gift of discerning and patronising a great Poet; a gift, which, like that of genuine Poetry, if we may believe one, who perhaps spoke feelingly upon the subject, is only bestowed on the chosen few by the peculiar favour of heaven:

—neque enim, NISI CARUS AB ORTU
DIIS SUPERIS, poterit MAGNO favisse POETÆ.
Milton's MANSUS.

I observe however, that, notwithstanding the petrifying quality, with which these Custom-house accounts might be expected to operate upon Chaucer's genius, he probably wrote his *House of Fame* while he was in that office. I gather this from B. ii. ver. 144. where the Eagle says to him,—

For when thy labour al done is,
And hast made all thy *rekenynges*,
In stede of rest and of newe thynges
Thou goest home to thyne house anone, &c.

From this time we find frequent mention of him in various public instruments[f]. In the 46 E. III. [*ap. Rymer.*] the King appoints him Envoy, with two others, to Genoa, by the title of *Scutifer noster*[g]. In the 48 E. III. he has a grant for life of a pitcher of wine daily [*ap. Rymer.*]; and in the same year a grant, during pleasure, of the offices of Comptroller of the custom of wools, and Comptroller of the parva custuma vinorum, &c. in the Port of London. *Ibid.* In the 49 E. III. the King grants to him the Wardship of Sir Edmund Staplegate's Heir [*MSS. Rymer*, E. III. vol. xi. n. 12.], for which he received 104*l.* [Ibid. R. II. vol. i. n. 16.]; and in the next year some forfeited wool to the value of 71*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.* [Life of Ch. Urr.] In the last year of Ed. III. he was sent to France, with Sir Guichard D'Angle and Richard Stan, or *Sturry*, to treat of a marriage between the Prince of Wales, Richard, and a daughter of the French King. *Froissart*, v. i. ch. 325.

In the next year, 1 R. II. his annuity of 20 marks was confirmed to him, and another annuity of 20 marks was granted to him in lieu of the pitcher of wine daily. See the Licence to surrender these grants in the Life of Ch. Urr. It is probable too that he was confirmed in his Office of Comptroller, though the instrument has not been produced[h]. In the 11th of R. II. he had the King's Licence to surrender his two grants of 20 marks each in favour of John Scalby[i]. In the 13th R. II. he appears to have been Clerk of the works at Westminster &c. and in the following year at Windsor[k]. In the 17th R. II. the King granted to him a new

[f] In the 44 E. III. Galf. Ch. in obsequium R. ad partes transmarinas profecturus hab. lit. R. de protectione, 20. Jun. [MS. Harl. 6960. fol. 205.]

[g] *Our Squier*; so that in the course of these five years our author had been promoted from the rank of *Yeoman*, to that of *Squier*, attendant upon the King. *Scutifer* and *Armiger*, LAT. are synonymous terms for the French *Escuier*. The Biographers thinking, I suppose, the title of *Squier* too vulgar, have changed it into *Shield-bearer*, as if Chaucer had the special office of carrying the King's shield.

Some observations have been made upon this appointment of Chaucer, as Envoy to Genoa, in the Discourse, &c. n. 20.

[h] This is probable, I think, because Chaucer, in his Testament of Love, frequently alludes to his loss of Office, as one of the greatest misfortunes brought upon him by his *meddling* in those disturbances which happened in the City of London in the 7th of R. II. When he fled, to avoid being examined in relation to those disturbances (as he says, Test. of L. fol. 329. b.), he was probably superseded in his office.

In the Editor's MS. additions the following grants, and the dates of them, are thus specified:

1 R. II. New grant of Comptroller of Wools, 22 Jan. MS. Harl. 6961. fol. 2.

5 R. II. New grant of Comptroller of parva Custuma vinorum, 20 Apr. Ibid. fol. 51.

8 R. II. Grant to execute the office of Comptroller by a deputy, 17 Feb. Ibid. fol. 74.

[i] This Licence, reciting the two grants, is printed in the Life of Ch. Urr. and the author of that life has observed, that this surrender was probably occasioned by our Author's distressed circumstances. Either he despaired of procuring payment of his pensions, or perhaps wanted to raise a sum of ready money. The same writer has extracted from the *Testament of Love* almost all that is now to be known of the history of this distress, which he ascribes very truly to Chaucer's unfortunate engagements with that party in the city of London, of which John of Northampton was at the head. What the real designs of that party were, and how a trifling City-riot, as it seems to have been, came to be treated as a rebellion, are points of great obscurity. There is good ground to believe that Northampton was connected with the Duke of Lancaster. At his trial, in August 1384, he contended, "that he ought not to be tried in the absence of his lord the Duke:" *quo verbo* (says Walsingham, p. 310.) *suscitavit suspicionem sinistram tam vulgi quam procerum contra Ducem.* He was condemned however to perpetual imprisonment; in which he remained till July 1390, when (according to the Monk of Evesham, p. 122.) *ad instantiam Ducis Lancastriæ*. Johannes Northampton —*et socii sui nuper de Londoniis banniti, restituti sunt ad pristinas libertates.* The judgement against him was reversed in Parliament the next year, *Rot. Parl.* 14 R. II. n. 36. and he was restored to his lands, &c. the year following, *Rot. Parl.* 15 R. II. n. 33. This connexion of Northampton with the Duke of Lancaster will account for the part which Chaucer appears to have taken in this unhappy affair. He was very early attached to that Duke, and was at this time married to a sister of Catherine Swinford, the Duke's mistress; and it is observable, that the first mark of royal favour, which he received after his distresses, was bestowed upon him at the same time that Northampton received his pardon, and probably through the same mediation.

[k] See Tanner's Bib. Brit. v. CHAUCER, n. e. It may justly be doubted whether these two offices together indemnified

annuity of twenty pounds [*ap. Rymer.*][1];—in the 21st, his Protection for two years [*Ibid.*];—and in the 22d, a pipe of wine annually. *Ibid.* In the next year, the 1st H. IV. his two grants, of the annuity of 20*l.* and of the pipe of wine, were confirmed to him [*MSS. Rymer*, H. IV. vol. i. n. 27.], and at the same time he had an additional grant of an annuity of 40 marks. *Ibid.* n. 15. He died, according to the inscription on his tomb-stone, in the beginning of the 2 H. IV on the 25th of October, 1400.

These, I think, are the principal facts in Chaucer's life, which are attested by authentic evidences[m]. We learn from himself, in his *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, that he had a son, called *Lowis*, who was ten years of age in 1391. It is the only circumstance, as I recollect, relating to his family, of which he has informed us. A few other historical particulars relating to himself, which may be collected from his writings, have been taken notice of already; and perhaps a more attentive examination of his works might furnish a few more. We must be cautious however, in such an examination, of supposing allusions which Chaucer never intended, or of arguing from pieces which he never wrote, as if they were his. We must not infer from his repeated commendations of the Daysie-flower, that he was specially favoured by Margaret, Countess of Pembroke[n]; and still less should we set him down as a *follower* of

our author for the loss of his former office in the Customs. That was probably a very lucrative one. He complains of "being berafte out of dignitie of Office, in which he made a gatheringe of worldly godes;" and in another place he speaks of himself as "once glorious in worldly welefulnesse, and having suche godes in welthe as maken men riche." Test. of L. fol. 326. a. b. But that he should ever have been possessed of "lands and revenues to the yearly value almost of a thousand pounds," according to the tradition repeated by Mr. Speght, is quite incredible.

[1] If Chaucer was ever possessed of Dunnington-castle in Berkshire, as his Biographers suppose he was, he must have purchased it about this time; for it appears to have been in the possession of Sir Richard Abberbury in the 16th year of R. II. *Monast. Ang.* ii. 474. We have no proof of any such purchase, and the situation of his affairs makes it highly improbable. The tradition, which Mr. Evelyn mentions in his *Sylva*, of an oak in Dunnington-park called *Chaucer's oak*, may be sufficiently accounted for without supposing that it was planted by Chaucer himself, as the Castle was undoubtedly in the hands of Thomas Chaucer for many years.

[m] It appears further from the *Exitus, Pasch.* 4 R. II. [MSS. Rymer, R. II. vol. ii. n. 3.] that Chaucer, on the 24 May, 1381, received at the Exchequer a half-year's payment of his own two annuities of 20 marks each, and also a half-year's payment of an annuity of 10 marks, granted by E. III. and confirmed by R. II. to his *wife* Philippa, *nuper uni domicellarum Philippæ, nuper Reginæ Angliæ.* The title given to her of *domicella* proves that she was unmarried at the time of her being in the Queen's service. There is a patent in Rymer, 43 E. III. by which the King, about four months after Queen Philippa's death, grants annuities to nine of her *Domicellæ*, viz. to four of them 10 marks, to two 5 pounds, and to three 5 marks. One of them is called *Philippa Pykard*, and might very well be supposed to be the lady whom Chaucer afterwards married, if it were not for two objections, 1. that the annuity granted to her is only 5 pounds, whereas Chaucer's wife appears by this record to have had one of 10 marks; and 2. that the Historians, though they own themselves totally ignorant of the Christian name of Chaucer's wife, are all agreed that her surname was *Rouet*, the same with that of her father and eldest sister, Catherine Swynford. The first objection might be got over by supposing that her annuity, though at first only 5 pounds, was encreased, perhaps upon her marriage with Chaucer, to 10 marks. As to the other point, it is not impossible that the father, and the eldest sister, who was his *heiress* [See Pat. 13 H. IV. p. 1. m. 35. *ap. Rymer.*], might bear the name of *de Rouet*, (or *de Roell*, as it is in the Pat. 13 H. IV. just quoted,) from some estate in their possession, and yet the younger Sister might be called by the family-name of *Pykard*.

If the records of payments at the Exchequer for the eleven years preceding 1381 are still in being, they may enable us to clear up these doubts, and also, perhaps, to ascertain very nearly the time of Chaucer's marriage, as they will probably shew when he began to receive his wife's annuity. If this last point were ascertained, we should know better what to think of the relation of Thomas Chaucer to our author. Mr. Speght informs us, "that some held opinion, that Thomas C. was not the sonne of Geffrey," and there are certainly many circumstances which might incline us to that opinion. I was in hopes of meeting with some light upon this subject in a Poem which Lydgate is said to have written, entitled, "A Complaint upon the departure of Thomas Chaucer into France, upon the Kynges Ambassate." A Poem, with this title, is extant in MS. *Harl.* 367. 33. in the hand-writing of J. Stowe; but upon inspection I found it to be a mere love-ballad, without the least imaginable reference to Thomas Chaucer.

[n] I can find no other foundation for this notion. Mr. Speght, who first started it, says, that "it may appeare in divers treatises by him written: as in *the Prologue of the Legend of good Women* under the name of the Daysie; and

Alain Chartier*, because his Editors have falsely ascribed to him a translation of one of Alain's poems.

Likewise *in a Ballad*, beginning, *In the season of Feverier*." The Ballad is among the additions made by John Stowe to Chaucer's works in 1561, and, like the greatest part of those additions, is *of very dubious authority*, to use the gentlest terms. But supposing it genuine, there is nothing in it to make us believe that it had any reference to the Countess of Pembroke. That its commendations of the Daysie ought not to weigh with us is very plain from the other piece cited by Mr. Speght: for the *Legende of good Women*, in which he imagines "the Lady Margaret to be honoured under the name of the Daysie," was certainly not written till at least twelve years after that Lady's death. See the Discourse, &c. n. 3. for the date of the *Legende*. The Countess *Margaret* must have died not later than 1370, as the Earl's son, by his second wife *Anne*, was about nineteen years of age, when he was killed in a tournament in 1391. Hollinshed, p. 471. It is possible that *le dit de la fleur de lis et de la Marguerite* by *Guillaume de Machaut* [Acad. des Inscr. t. xx. p. 381.] and the *Dittié de la flour de la Margherite* by *Froissart* [Ibid. t. x. p. 669. t. xiv. hist. p. 223.], neither of which had the least relation to the Countess of Pembroke,) might furnish us with the true key to those mystical compliments, which our poet has paid to the Daysie-flower.

* Leland was the first author of this story, which is totally inconsistent with Chronology. The time of Alain's birth has not been settled with precision; but he was certainly living near 50 years after Chaucer's death; which makes it morally impossible that the latter should have *followed* him, in his attempts to polish his native language. *La Balade de Fougieres* [Œuvres d'Alain Chartier, p. 717.] was written upon the taking of that place by the English in 1448. There is another piece attributed to Alain [Ibid. p. 779.], which is thus entitled, *Complainte faite à Paris et présentée à sa dame l'an mil quatre cents cinquante deux*. Instead therefore of supposing from the translation of *La belle dame sans mercie* that Chaucer imitated Alain Chartier, we should rather conclude, that he was not the author of that translation; which indeed in MS. *Harl.* 372, is expressly attributed to a *Sir Richard Ros*.

I will just take notice of another opinion, (which has been propagated upon as little foundation,) that Chaucer imitated the Provençal poets. Mr. Rymer, who, I believe, first made the discovery, speaks only of his having borrowed from their *language* [View of Trag. p. 78.], but Mr. Dryden found out, that he composed *after their manner*, particularly his tale of *the Flower and the Leaf*. Pref. to Fables. Mr. Warton also thinks, that *the House of Fame* "was originally a Provencial composition." Hist. of Eng. Po. p. 389. 458.

How far Chaucer's *language* was borrowed, has been considered already, in the Essay, &c. Part i. I will only add here, that I have not observed in any of his writings a single phrase or word, which has the least appearance of having been fetched by him from the South of the Loire. With respect to the *manner* and *matter* of his compositions, till some clear instance of imitation be produced, I shall be slow to believe that in either he ever copied the poets of Provence, with whose works, I apprehend, he had very little, if any, acquaintance.

[The following deposition was made by Chaucer Oct. 15, 1386, in the celebrated Scrope and Grosvenor controversy. It was first printed in Godwin's *Life of Chaucer* (*Appendix* i.), and has more recently appeared as a portion of Sir H. Nicolas's valuable publication, *The Scrope and Grosvenor Roll* (vol. i. 178):

"Geffray Chaucere Esquier del age de xl ans et plus armeez par xxvii ans product pur la partie de mons. Richard Lescrope, jurrez et examinez:

"Demandez, si lez armeez dazure ove un bende dor apperteignent ou deyvent apperteigner au dit mons. Richard de droit et de heritage, dist,

"Que oil; qar il lez ad veu estre armeez en Fraunce devant la ville de Retters, et mons. Henry Lescrope armez en mesmes lez armeez ove un label blanc et a baner et le dit mons. Richard armeez en les entiers armez dazure ove un bende dor, et issint il lez vist armer par tout le dit viage, tanque le dit Geffrey estoit pris:

"Demandez, par qei il sciet que lez ditz armez apperteignent au dit mons. Richard, dist,

"Que par oy dire dez veux chivalers et esquiers, et qils ount toutdys continuez lour possession en les ditz armez, et par tout son temps pur lour armeez reputeez com commune fame et publike vois laboure et ad labouree; et auxi il dist que quant il ad veu lez ditz armes en baneres, en verrures, en peyntures, en vestementz, communement appellez les armez de Lescrope:

"Demandez, sil oiast unques parler quele estoit le primer auncestre du dit mons. Richard, qi portast primerment lez ditz armez, dist,

"Que noun; ne qil ne oiast unques autre mes qils estoient venuz de veille auncestre et de dez veulz gentils hommes et occupiez lez ditz armes:

"Demandez, sil oiast unques parler com long temps que les auncestres du dit mons. Richard ount usus les dits armes, dist,

"Que noun; mes com il ad oy dire qil passe la memoir de homme:

"Demandez, sil oiast unques dascun interrupcion ou chalange fait par mons. Robert Grovenour, ou par cez auncestres, ou par ascun en son noun, al dit mons. Richard, ou a ascun de cez auncestres, dist,

"Que noun; mes il dist qil estoit une foitz en Fridaystrete en Loundres, com il alast en la rewe il vist pendant hors un novell signe fait dez ditz armez, et demandast quele herbergerie ceo estoit que avoit pendu hors cestez armes du Scrope, et un autre luy respondist et dit, Neuyl, seigneur, ils ne sount mye penduz hors pour les armez de Scrope, ne depeyntez la pour cez armeez, mes il sount depeyntez et mye la pour une chivaler del counte de Chestre, que homme appelle mons. Robert Grovenour; et ceo fuist le primer foitz que oonques il oiast parler de mons. Robert Grovenour, ou de cez auncestres, ou de ascun autre portant le noun de Grovenour."

"The time of Chaucer's birth," observes Sir H. Nicolas, "has lately been much discussed in consequence of the statement in his deposition in the Scrope and Grosvenor controversy, that he was in October 1386 of the age of 'forty and upwards,' and 'had been armed twenty-seven years,' which, if strictly correct, would make him to have been born about 1345, and to have served for the first time in the field in 1359; whereas the birth of the poet has been always hitherto assigned, though without any positive evidence, to the year 1328. There are, however, strong reasons, derived from many passages in his own works and in the writings of Gower, for believing that he was born long before 1345; and the many instances which have been adduced of the mistakes that occur respecting the ages of the deponents, of whom some are stated to have been ten, and others even twenty years younger than they actually were, prevents Chaucer's deposition being conclusive on the point. It is therefore possible that he was ten or even fifteen years above forty in 1386. He had, he said, borne arms for twenty-seven years, on which subject the deponents were generally more correct, so that assuming that he was about fifty-five when examined at Westminster, he did not commence his military career until 1359, at which time he was above twenty-eight." Vol. ii. p. 404.

The following entries are from the *Issue Roll of Thomas de Brantingham*, &c. (edited by Mr. Devon):

44 Edward iii,

Thursday, the 25th day of April.

"Geoffry Chaucer. { To Geoffry Chaucer, the King's valet, to whom the Lord the King, by his letters patent, lately granted 20 marks annually, to be received at the Exchequer during his life, for the good service rendered by him to the same Lord the King. In money delivered to him, by the hands of Walter Walsh, in discharge of the 10 marks payable to him for this his allowance,—to wit, at Easter Term last past, by his writ of *Liberate*, amongst the mandates of this Term . . . . . £6 13 4."

p. 19, (see also p. 289.)

44 Edward iii.,

Wednesday, the 7th day of November.

"Philippa Chaucer. { To Philippa Chaucer, to whom the Lord the King, by his letters patent, lately granted 10 marks yearly, to be received at the Exchequer during her life, (for the good service) rendered by her to the same Lord the King. In money delivered to her by the hands of John de Hermesthorp, in discharge of the 10 marks for this her allowance . . . . . £6 13 4."

p. 359.

The following entries occur in *Issues of the Exchequer*, &c. (edited by Mr. Devon):

Michaelmas, 51 Edward iii. "*27th November.*—To Philippa Chaucer, one of the maids of honour of the chamber of Philippa, late Queen of England, to whom the Lord the King granted 10 marks yearly, to be received at the Exchequer during her life, or until otherwise he should provide for her estate. In money delivered to her by the hands of Geoffrey Chaucer, in discharge of the 5 marks payable to her for this her allowance,—to wit, at Michaelmas term last past. By writ of liberate amongst the mandates of this term,—3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*"

p. 203.

Easter, 2 Richard ii. "*24th May.*—To Geoffrey Chaucer, to whom the present Lord the King, on the 18th day of April in the first year of his reign, by his letters patent, granted 20 marks yearly, to be received at the Exchequer at the feasts of Saint Michael and Easter by equal portions, for the good services performed and hereafter to be performed by him to the same Lord the King, and in recompense of a pitcher of wine charged by the Lord King Edward, grandfather of the present King, upon the port of the city of London, by the hands of the butler of the same King Edward and his heirs, also lately granted by letters patent to be received daily during the life of the said Geoffrey. In money paid to him by assignment made this day in discharge of 12*l.* 4*s.*, paid to him for this his allowance,—to wit, as well rateably from the aforesaid 18th day of April unto the feast of Saint Michael next following, as for the term of Easter last past. By writ, &c.,—12*l.* 13*s.*"

p. 210.

elmas, 4 Richard ii. "*28th November.*—To Geoffrey Chaucer, in money paid to his own hands in discharge of 14*l.* due upon an account made with him at the Exchequer of account, for receipt of his wages and expenses in going upon the King's message to Lombardy, in the 1st year of the reign of King Richard ii. By writ of privy seal, &c.,—14*l.*"

p. 214

— ——— "*6th March.*—To Geoffrey Chaucer, an esquire of the King. In money paid to his own hands, by assignment made to him this day, in discharge of 22*l.*, which the Lord the King commanded to be paid him of his gift in recompense of his wages, and the charges by him incurred in going as well in the time of King Edward, grandfather of the present King, as a messenger of the same grandfather, to Mounstrell and Paris, in France, on account of a treaty of peace pending between the aforesaid grandfather and his adversary of France; as in the time of the present Lord the King, to make a communication respecting a marriage to be had between the same Lord the King and the daughter of his said enemy of France. By writ of privy seal, &c.,—22*l.*"

p. 215

elmas, 13 Richard ii. "*7th October.*—To Geoffrey Chaucer, clerk of the works of the Lord the King within the palace of Westminster, Tower of London, and divers others the King's castles and manors. In money paid to him by assignment made this day,—to wit, by the hands of John Hermesthorp, clerk of the works near the Tower. By writ of liberate amongst the mandates of Easter term last past,—66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* [*Note.*—This Roll contains several other payments to Geoffrey Chaucer, as clerk of the King's works.]"

p. 239.]

AN ESSAY

ON

THE LANGUAGE AND VERSIFICATION OF CHAUCER.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION. The different judgements of the Language and Versification of Chaucer stated. Plan of this Essay, in three parts. 1. To vindicate Chaucer from the charge of having corrupted the English Language by too great a mixture of French with it. 2. To make some observations upon the real state of our language in his time. 3. To apply those observations and others towards illustrating the real nature of his Versification.

PART THE FIRST.

§ I. The French Language introduced into England before the Conquest; § II. confirmed and propagated by the new establishments at the Conquest; § III. was the ordinary language of the Court; § IV. was carried into the Provinces by the great Barons and military Commanders; § V. and especially by the Clergy; § VI. who, both Secular and Regular, were chiefly foreigners. § VII. The French Language continued to be much used as late as the reign of Edward III. § VIII. Conclusion, that the mixture of French in Chaucer's writings was not owing to any affectation of his, but to the causes above-mentioned, which in his time had generally introduced the Norman-Saxon instead of the Saxon Dialect; the same mixture being observable in other contemporary authors.

PART THE SECOND.

§ I. The proposed observations upon the English language confined to the actual state of it in the time of Chaucer, § II. and divided, so as to consider separately the Saxon and Norman parts of it. § III. The Saxon part considered in grammatical order. 1. The Prepositive Article. 2. Nouns substantive and adjective. 3. Pronouns. 4. Verbs and Participles. 5. The indeclinable parts of speech. § IV. The Norman part considered generally, § V. and more particularly with respect to Nouns, substantive and adjective, Verbs, and Participles. § VI. Additional causes of the introduction of a great number of French terms into the English Language.

PART THE THIRD.

§ I. Preliminary observations upon English Poetry. The form of English Poetry probably borrowed from the Normans, there being no traces of Rime, or Metre, among the Saxons before the Conquest. The Metres and Rime of modern Poetry derived from the Latin. § II. Progress of English Poetry to the reign of Henry II. Early attempts at riming. § III. Few English Poets known between the reign of Henry II. and that of Henry III. § IV. The *Ormulum* written in verses of fifteen syllables without rime. § V. The number of Rimers increased between the last mentioned period and the time when Chaucer began to write. § VI. State of our Poetry at that time. § VII. Account of the Metres then in use; § VIII of those used by Chaucer. § IX. The Heroic Metre probably introduced by him, either from France or Italy. § X. A knowledge of the ancient pronunciation of our language necessary in order to form a judgement of the Versification of Chaucer. § XI. How a critic in the age of Augustus would have proceeded in judging of the Metre of Ennius. § XII. The same method recommended with respect to Chaucer. General reasons for believing that he understood and practised the ordinary rules of Metre. § XIII. The offences against Metre, in an English verse, enumerated, as arising from 1. a superfluity, 2. a deficiency, of syllables; and 3. a misplacing of Accents. § XIV. No *superfluity* of syllables in Chaucer's verses. § XV. The seeming *deficiencies* in his Metre may generally be supplied by restoring the antient pronunciation of certain syllables. § XVI. and especially of the *e* feminine. Reasons for believing that the final *e* in our antient language was pronounced like the *e* feminine of the French. § XVII. The third kind of irregularity, arising from a *misplacing of accents*, may be rectified, in many instances, by accenting certain words in a manner different from that now in use, and more agreeable to the French practice. Proofs that such a mode of accentuation was used by Chaucer, in words of Saxon, as well as of French original. The early poets in France and Italy not exact in the disposition of their accents. § XVIII. Illustration of the foregoing Theory by a Grammatical and Metrical Analysis of the first eighteen lines of the Canterbury Tales.

THE Language of Chaucer has undergone two very different judgements. According to one[1], he is the "well of English undefiled;" according to the other[2], he has corrupted and

[1] Spenser, F. Q. b. IV. c. ii. st. 32.

[2] Verstegan, c. 7. "Some few ages ages after [the Conquest] came the Poet Geffery Chaucer, who writing his

deformed the English idiom by an immoderate mixture of French words. Nor do the opinions with respect to his versification seem to have been less discordant. His contemporaries [3], and they who lived nearest to his time, universally extoll him as the "chief Poete of Britaine," "the flour of Poetes," &c. titles, which must be supposed to imply their admiration of his metrical skill, as well as of his other poetical talents; but the later critics [4], though they leave him in possession of the same sounding titles, yet they are almost unanimously agreed, that he was either totally ignorant or negligent of metrical rules, and that his verses, if they may be so called, are frequently deficient, by a syllable or two, of their just measure.

It is the purpose of the following Essay to throw some light upon both these questions. Admitting the fact, that the English of Chaucer has a great mixture of French in it, I hope to shew, that this mixture, if a crime, cannot fairly be laid to his charge. I shall then proceed to state some observations upon the most material peculiarities of the Norman-Saxon, or English Language, as it appears to have been in general use in the age of Chaucer; and lastly, applying these observations to the poetical parts of the Canterbury Tales, as they are faithfully printed in this edition from the best MSS. which I coud procure, I shall leave it to the intelligent Reader to determine, whether Chaucer was really ignorant of the laws, or even of the graces, of Versification, and whether he was more negligent of either than the very early Poets in almost all languages are found to have been.

PART THE FIRST.

§ 1. In order to judge, in the first place, how far Chaucer ought to be charged as the importer of the many French words and phrases, which are so visible in all his writings, it will be necessary to take a short view of the early introduction and long prevalency of the French language in this country before his time. It might be sufficient, perhaps, for our purpose to begin this view at the Conquest: but I cannot help observing, from a contemporary Historian, that, several years before that great event, the language of France had been introduced into the court of England, and from thence among the people. The account which Ingulphus gives of this matter is [5], that Edward, commonly called the Confessor, having been educated at the

---

poesies in English is of some called the first illuminator of the English tongue. Of their opinion I am not, though I reverence Chaucer as an excellent Poet for his time. He was indeed *a great mingler of English with* FRENCH, unto which language (by like for that he was descended of French, or rather Wallon race) he carried a great affection."

Skinner, Etymol. L. A. Præf. "Ex hoc malesano novitatis pruritu, Belgæ Gallicas voces passim civitate sua donando patrii sermonis puritatem nuper non leviter inquinârunt, et CHAUCERUS poeta, pessimo exemplo, *integris vocum plenstris ex eadem* GALLIA *in nostram linguam invectis*, eam, nimis antea a Normannorum victoria adulteratam, omni fere nativa gratia et nitore spoliavit."

[3] Lydgate, Occleve, et al. See the Testimonies prefixed to Urry's Edit.

[4] I shall only quote Dryden, Pref. to his Fables. "The verse of Chaucer, I confess, is not harmonious to us;—They who lived with him, and some time after him, thought it musical; and it continues so even in our judgment, if compared with the numbers of Lidgate and Gower, his contemporaries;—'Tis true, I cannot go so far as he, who published the last edition of him [Mr. Speght]; for he would make us believe the fault is in our ears, and that there were really ten syllables in a verse where we find but nine. But this opinion is not worth confuting; 'tis so gross and obvious an error, that common sense (which is a rule in every thing but matters of Faith and Revelation) must convince the Reader, that equality of numbers in every verse which we call *Heroick*, was either not known, or not always practised, in Chaucer's age. It were an easy matter to produce some thousands of his verses, which are lame for want of half a foot, and sometimes a whole one, and which no pronunciation can make otherwise."

This peremptory decision has never since, that I know, been controverted, except by Mr. Urry, whose design of restoring the metre of Chaucer by a Collation of MSS. was as laudable, as his execution of it has certainly been unsuccessful.

[5] Ingulph. Hist. Croyl. p. 62. ed. Gale. "*Rex autem Edwardus natus in Anglia, sed nutritus in Normannia et*

court of his uncle Duke Richard II. and having resided in Normandy many years, became *almost a Frenchman.* Upon his return from thence and accession to the throne of England in 1043, he brought over with him a number of Normans, whom he promoted to the highest dignities; and, according to Ingulphus, under the influence of the King and his Norman favourites, the whole nation began to lay aside their English fashions and imitate the manners of the French in many things. In particular, he says expressly, that *all the Nobility in their courts began to speak French, as a great piece of gentility.*

§ II. This fashion however of speaking French, having been adopted only in compliance with the caprice of the reigning prince, would not probably have spread very wide or lasted very long; but at the Revolution, which followed soon after in 1066, the language of the Norman conquerour was interwoven with the new political system[6], and the several establishments, which were made for the support and security of the one, all contributed, in a greater or less degree, to the diffusion and permanency of the other.

§ III. To begin with the court. If we consider that the King himself, the chief officers of state, and by far the greatest part of the nobility, were all Normans, and coud probably speak no language but their own, we can have no doubt that French[7] was the ordinary language of the court. The few Saxons, who for some time[8] were admitted there, must have had the strongest inducements to acquire the same language as soon as possible, not merely for the sake of apprehending and answering insignificant questions in the circle, but because in that age affairs of the greatest importance were publickly transacted in the King's court, and there they might be called upon to answer for their possessions and even for their lives. In an ecclesiastical synod, held in the presence of the King in 1072, the venerable bishop of Worcester,

diutissime immoratus, pene in Gallicum transierat, *adducens ac attrahens de Normannia plurimos, quos veriis dignitatibus promotos in immensum exaltabat. Cœpit ergo tota terra sub Rege et sub aliis Normannis introductis Anglicos ritus dimittere, et Francorum mores in multis imitari,* Gallicum [scilicet] idioma omnes Magnates in suis curiis tanquam magnum gentilitium loqui, *chartas et chirographa sua more Francorum conficere, et propriam consuetudinem in his et in aliis multis erubescere.*"

[6] Robert Holkot (as quoted by Selden, *ad Eadmer.* p. 189.) says, that the Conquerour—"*deliberavit quomodo linguam Saxonicam posset destruere, et Angliam et Normanniam in idiomate concordare.*"—But Holkot wrote only in the fourteenth century, and I do not find that the earlier historians impute to the King so silly a project. On the contrary Ordericus Vitalis, l. iv. p. 520, assures us that William—"*Anglicam locutionem plerumque sategit ediscere: ut sine interprete querelam subjectæ legis posset intelligere, et scita rectitudinis unicuique (prout ratio dictaret) affectuose depromere. Ast a perceptione hujusmodi durior ætas illum compescebat, et tumultus multimodarum occupationum ad alia necessario adtrahebat.*"—And several of his publick instruments, which are still extant in Saxon, [Hickes G. A. S. p. 164.—Præf. p. xv, xvi.] prove that he had no objection to using that language in business; so that it seems more natural to suppose, that the introduction of the French language was a consequence only, and not an object, of his policy.

[7] I apprehend that long before this time the Danish tongue had ceased to be spoken in Normandy. It was never general there, as appears from a passage of Dudon, l. iii. p. 112. Duke William I. gives this reason for sending his son Richard to be educated at Baieux. "*Quoniam quidem* Rotomagensis *civitas* Romanâ, *potius quam* Daciscâ *utitur eloquentiâ, et* Bajocacensis *fruitur frequentius* Daciscâ *lingud quam* Romanâ, *volo igitur ut ad* Bajocacensia *deferatur quantocius mænia,*" &c. If we recollect, that the Danish settlers under Rollo were few in comparison with the original inhabitants, and had probably scarce any use of letters among them, we shall not be surprised that they did not preserve their language for above two or three generations.

From two other passages of the same Dudon we learn, that the Danish language, while it lasted in Normandy, was very similar to the Saxon [p. 99.], and yet different from it [p. 100.]; *qualem decet esse sororem.*

[8] After the death of Edwin, and the imprisonment of Morcar in 1070, we do not read of any Saxon Earl, except Waltheof, and he was executed for misprision of treason about three years after. *Orderic. Vit.* l. iv. p. 536. It is singular, that Waltheof, according to the Saxon law, suffered death for the concealment of that treason, for which Roger de Breteuil, Earl of Hereford, being tried *secundum leges Normannorum,* coud only be punished by a forfeiture of his inheritance and perpetual imprisonment. *Id.* p. 535. From this time (says Ingulphus, p. 70.) *Comitatus et Baronias, Episcopatus et Prælatias totius terræ suis Normannis Rex distribuit, et vix aliquem Anglicum ad honoris statum vel alicujus dominii principatum ascendere permisit.*

Wulstan, (whose *holy simplicity*, as the[9] Historian calls it, seems to have preserved him from the degradation which almost all the other English Prelates underwent) was obliged to defend the rights of his see by an interpreter, *a monk* (according to the same[10] Historian) *of very little eloquence, but who had a smattering of the* Norman *language.*

§ IV. If we consider further, that the great Barons, to whom William[11] distributed a large share of his conquest, when released from their attendance in the King's court, retired to courts of their own, where they in their turn were surrounded by a numerous train of vassals, chiefly their own countrymen, we may be sure that the French language travelled with them into the most distant provinces, and was used by them, not only in their common conversation, but in their civil contracts, their judicial proceedings, and even in the promulgation of their[12] laws. The many Castles, which William built[13] in different parts of the island, must also have contributed very much to the propagation of the French language among the natives, as it is probable that the Foreigners, of whom the garrisons were[14] entirely composed, would insist upon carrying on all their transactions with the neighbouring country in their own language.

§ V. But the great alteration, which, from political motives, was made in the state of the clergy at that time, must have operated perhaps more efficaciously than any other cause to give the French language a deep root in England. The Conquerour seems to have been fully apprized of the strength which the new government might derive from a Clergy more closely attached to himself by a community of interests than the native English were likely to be. Accordingly, from the very beginning of his reign, all ecclesiastical preferments, as fast as they became vacant, were given to his Norman chaplains; and, not content to avail himself of the ordinary course of succession, he contrived[15], upon various charges of real or pretended

---

[9] Will. Malmesb. l. iii. p. 118. *Hic sancta simplicitas beati Vulstani* &c. The story which follows perfectly justifies this character. Matt. Paris, ad an. 1095, says that in another Synod there was a formal design of deposing Wulstan, and that he was saved only by a miracle. He was accused "*simplicitatis et illiteraturæ;*"—"*et quasi homo idiota, qui linguam Gallicanam non noverat, nec regiis consiliis interesse poterat, ipso Rege consentiente et hoc dictante, decernitur deponendus.*"

[10] Ibid. *Ita datâ benedictione Monacho, minimæ facundiæ viro, sed Normannicæ linguæ* sciolo, *rem perorans obtinuit.*

[11] There is a curious detail of part of this distribution in Ordericus Vitalis, l. iv. p. 521, 2. which concludes thus: —"*aliisque advenis, qui sibi cohæserant, magnos et multos honores contulit; et in tantum quosdam provexit, ut multos in Angliâ ditiores et potentiores haberent clientes, quam eorum in Neustriâ fuerant parentes.*" There is an account in the Monast. Angl. t. i. p. 400. of the Conquerour's giving the whole county of Cumberland to Ranulph de Meschines, and of the division which Ranulph made of it among his relations and followers, who appear to have been all foreigners.

[12] The antient Earls had a power of legislation within their Counties. William of Malmesbury, speaking of William Fitz-Osberne, Earl of Hereford, says; "*Manet in hunc diem in Comitatu ejus apud Herefordum legum quas statuit inconcussa firmitas; ut nullus miles pro qualicunque commisso plus septem solidis solvat; cum in aliis provinciis ob parvam occasiunculam in transgressione præcepti herilis, viginti vel viginti quinque pendantur.*" Lib. iii. p. 105.

[13] Ordericus Vitalis, l. iv. p. 511. observes, that before the Conquest, "*Munitiones, quas Castella Galli nuncupant, Anglicis provinciis paucissimæ fuerant: et ob hoc Angli, licet bellicosi fuerint et audaces, ad resistendum tamen inimicis extiterant debiliores.*" William, at his landing, placed garrisons at *Pevensey* and *Hastings*. After the battle, he took possession of *Dover*, and left a garrison there. He caused "*firmamenta quædam*" to be made at *London*, and built a strong citadel at *Winchester*. Upon his return from Normandy, after the first insurrection of the English, he built a castle within the city of *Exeter*; another at *Warwick*; and another at *Nottingham*. In the city of *York*, "*munitionem firmavit, quam delectis militibus custodiendam tradidit.*" At *Lincoln*, *Huntingdon*, and *Cambridge*, "*castra locavit et tutelam eorum fortissimis viris commendavit.*" He had also garrisons at *Montacute* in Somersetshire, and at *Shrewsbury*. He built fortifications at *Chester* and *Stafford*. We read also of castles at *Arundel* and *Stutesbury* at this time; and *Norwich* was so strong as to stand a siege of three months. *Ord. Vit.* p. 500—535.

[14] Orderic. Vital. l. iv. p. 506. *Custodes in castellis strenuos viros* ex Gallis *collocavit, et opulenta beneficia, pro quibus labores et pericula libenter tolerarent, distribuit.*

[15] See the transactions of the Council held at *Winchester* in the year 1070, ap. Flor. Vicorn. p. 636. Having spoken

irregularities, to remove several of the English Bishops and Abbots, whose places were in like manner immediately supplied by Foreigners. In short, in the space of a very few years, all the Sees of England were filled with Normans, or strangers naturalized, if I may so say, in Normandy, and the greatest part of the Abbeys in the kingdom were under governours of the same description.

§ VI. It must be allowed, that the confessed superiority [16] in literature of the Norman clergy over the English at that time furnished the King with a specious pretext for these promotions; and it is probable, that the Prelates, who were thus promoted, made use of the same pretext to justify themselves in disposing of all their best benefices among their friends and countrymen. That this was their constant practice is certain. Nor were the new Abbots less industrious to stock their convents [17] with Foreigners, whom they invited over from the Continent, partly perhaps for the pleasure of their society, and partly, as we may suppose, in expectation of their support against the cabals of the English monks. And when the great Barons, following the royal example, applied themselves to make their peace with the Church by giving her a share of their plunder, it was their usual custom to begin their religious establishments with a colony [18] from some Norman Monastery.

§ VII. In this state of things, which seems to have continued [19] with little variation to the

---

of the degradation of Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Agelmar, Bishop of the East Saxons, he proceeds thus: *Abbates etiam aliqui ibi degradati sunt, operam dante rege ut quamplures ex Anglis suo honore privarentur*, in quorum locum suæ gentis personas subrogavit, ob confirmationem sui (quod noviter acquisierat) regni. *Hic et nonnullus, tam episcopos quam Abbates*, quos nulla evidenti causa nec concilia nec leges seculi damnabant, *suis honoribus privavit, et usque ad finem vitæ custodiæ mancipatos detinuit, suspicione, ut diximus, tantum inductus novi regni.*

In confirmation of what is said here and in the text, if we examine the subscriptions to an Ecclesiastical Constitution in 1072, ap. Will. Malm. l. iii. p. 117. we find that the two Archbishops, seven Bishops out of eleven, and six Abbots out of twelve, were Foreigners: and in about five years more the four other Bishopricks, and five at least of the other six Abbeys, were in the hands of Foreigners.

Another Ecclesiastical Constitution made at this time has very much the appearance of a political regulation. It orders "that the Bishops' seats shall be removed from towns to cities;" and in consequence of it the See of Lichefield was removed to Chester; that of Selesey to Chichester; that of Elmham to Thetford, and afterwards to Norwich; that of Shireburne to Salisbury, and that of Dorchester to Lincoln. *Will. Malm.* l. iii. p. 118. When the King had got a set of Bishops to his mind, he would wish to have them placed where their influence coud be of most service to him.

[16] Ordericus Vitalis, l. iv. p. 519. says, that the Normans at the Conquest found the English, "*agrestes et pene illiteratos;*" and he imputes, with some probability, the decay of learning among them, from the time of Beda and others, to the continual ravages and oppressions of the Danes. See also William of Malmesbury, l. iii. p. 101, 2. It may be observed too, from Continuat. Hist. Croyland, by Peter of Blois, p. 114. that the first regular lectures (of which we have any account) at Cambridge were read there by four foreign Monks, who had come over into England with Jeffrey, Abbot of Croyland, formerly Prior of St. Evroul. They are said to have read "*diversis in locis a se divisi et formam Aurelianensis studii secuti,*" three of them in Grammar, Logick, and Rhetorick, and the fourth in Theology.

[17] See the preceding note. There was no great harmony at first between the English monks and their new governours. See the proceedings at Glastonbury under Thurstin [Will. Malm. l. iii. p. 110], and at Canterbury against Wido. [Chron. Saxon. p. 179, 180. ed. Gibson.]

[18] The Conquerour had put Goisbert, a monk of Marmontier, at the head of his new foundation of Battle Abbey. *Ord. Vital.* l. iv. p. 505. In like manner Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, sent for Monks from Sées to begin his Abbey at Shrewsbury. *Id.* l. iv. p. 581. Walter Espec also brought over Monks of Clervaulx to fill his two Abbeys, of Rivaulx, and Wardun. *Ailr. Rievall. ap. X Script. p.* 338.

Beside these and many other independent foundations, which were in this manner opened for the reception of foreign Monks in preference to the natives, a considerable number of Religious Houses were built and endowed, as cells to different monasteries abroad; and as such were constantly filled by detachments from the superiour society They are frequently mentioned in our histories under the general name of the *Alien Priories;* and though several of them, upon various pretexts, had withdrawn themselves from their foreign connexions and been made denizens, no less than one hundred and forty remained in 1414, which were then all suppressed and their revenues vested in the crown. See the List, Monast. Angl. v. i. p. 1035.

[19] I suppose that, during this whole period of above 250 years, the English language was continually gaining ground,

universally French, the lower retaining the use of their native tongue, but also frequently adding to it a knowledge of the other. The general inducements which the English had to acquire the French language have been touched upon above; to which must be added, that the children, who were put to learn Latin, were under a necessity of learning French at the same time, as it was the constant practice in all schools, from the Conquest [21] till about the reign of Edward III. to make the scholars construe their Latin lessons into French. From the discontinuance of this practice, as well as from other causes, the use and, probably, the knowledge of French, as a separate language, received a considerable check. In the 36th year of Edward III. a law [22] was made, "that all pleas, in the courts of the King or of any other Lord,

intelligens, sed cum difficultate pronuncians. Unde, cum in consecratione suâ profiteri debuit, quamvis per multos dies ante instructorem habuisset, legere nescivit: et cum, auriculantibus [f. articulantibus] aliis, cum difficultate ad illud verbum *metropolitica* pervenisset, et diu anhelans pronunciare non posset, dixit in Gallico; *Seit pur dite.*—Et cum similiter celebraret ordines, nec illud verbum *in ænigmate* proferre posset, dixit circumstantibus: *Par Seint Lowys, il ne fu pas curteis, qui ceste parole ici escrit.*" Hist. Dunelm. ap. Wharton, Ang. Sac. t. i. p. 761.

The transactions at Norham, in 1291, the 20 Ed. I. with respect to the Scottish Succession, appear to have been almost wholly carried on in French, for which it is difficult to account but by supposing that language to have been the language of the Court in both nations. See the Roll de Superior. Reg. Angl. in Prynne, t. i. p. 487, et seq. Edward's claim of the Superiority is first made by Sir Roger Brabanson *Sermone Gallico*; and afterwards the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and the King himself, speak to the assembly of English and Scots in the same language. Ibid. p. 499. 501.

The answers of the Bishop of Durham to the Pope's Nuncioes *in Gallico* [Walt. Hemingf. ad an. 1295.] may be supposed to have been out of complaisance to the Cardinals, (though, by the way, they do not appear to have been Frenchmen;) but no such construction can be put upon the following fact related by Matthew of Westminster [ad an. 1301. p. 438.] The Archbishop of Canterbury informs the Pope, that he had presented his Holinesses letters to the King in a full court, "*quas ipse dominus rex reverenter recipiens, eas publice legi coram omnibus*, et in Gallicâ linguâ fecerat patenter exponi."

[21] Ingulphus, a contemporary writer, informs us that this practice began at the Conquest, p. 71. "*Ipsum etiam, idioma* [Anglicum] *tantum abhorrebant* [Normanni], *quod leges terræ statutaque Anglicorum regum linguâ Gallicâ tractarentur*; et pueris etiam in scholis principia literarum grammatica Gallice ac non Anglice traderentur; *modus etiam scribendi Anglicus omitteretur, et modus Gallicus in chartis et in libris omnibus admitteretur.*"—And Trevisa, the translator and augmenter of Higden's Polychronicon in the reign of Richard II. gives us a very particular account of its beginning to be disused within his own memory. The two passages of Higden and Trevisa throw so much light upon the subject of our present enquiry, that I shall insert them both at length, from MS. *Harl.* 1900. as being more correct in several places than the MS. from which Dr. Hickes formerly printed them in his Præf. ad Thes. Ling. Septent. p. xvii.

Higden's *Polychron.* b. i. c. lix. This apayringe of the birthe tonge is by cause of tweye thinges: oon is for children in scole, azenes the usage and maner of alle other nacioun, beth compelled for to leve her owne langage, and for to constrewe her lessouns and her thingis a Frensche, and haveth siththe that the Normans come first into England. Also gentil mennes children beth ytauzt for to speke Frensche, from the tyme that thei beth rokked in her cradel, and kunneth speke and playe with a childes brooche. And uplondish men wole likne hem self to gentil men, and fondeth with grete bisynesse for to speke Frensche, for to be the more ytold of.

Trevisa. This maner was myche yused to fore the first moreyn, and is siththe som del ychaungide. For John Cornwaile, a maistre of grammer, chaungide the lore in grammer scole and construction of Frensch into Englisch, and Richard Pencriche lerned that maner teching of him, and other men of Pencriche. So that now, the zere of oure lord a thousand thre hundred foure score and fyve, of the secunde king Rychard after the Conquest nyne, in alle the gramer scoles of Englond children leveth Frensch, and construeth and lerneth an Englisch, and haveth therby avauntage in oon side and desavauntage in another. Her avauntage is, that thei lerneth her grammer in lasse tyme than children were wont to do. Desavauntage is, that now children of grammer scole kunneth no more Frensch than can her lifte heele. And that is harm for hem, and thei schul passe the see and travaile in strange londes, and in many other places also. Also gentel men haveth now mych yleffe for to teche her children Frensch.

[22] This celebrated statute is said by Walsingham [p. 179.] to have been made "*ad petitionem Communitatis*;" but no such petition appears upon the Parliament-roll: and it seems rather to have been an Act of Grace, moving from the King, who on the same day entered into the fiftieth year of his age; "*unde in suo Jubileo populo suo se exhibuit gratiosum.*" Walsing. ibid. It is remarkable too, that the cause of summons at the beginning of this Parliament was declared by Sir Henry Greene, Chief Justice, *en Engleis* (says the Record for the first time): and the same Entry is repeated in the Records of the Parliaments 37 and 38 Edw. III. but not in those of 40 Edw. III. or of any later Parliament; either because the custom of opening the cause of summons in French was restored again after that

shall be pleaded and judged in the English tongue," and the preamble recites, "*that the French tongue* (in which they had been usually pleaded, &c.) *was too much unknown*," or disused; and yet, for near threescore years after this[23] the proceedings in Parliament, with very few exceptions, appear to have been all in French, and the statutes continued to be published in the same language, for above one hundred and twenty years, till the first of Richard III.

§ VIII. From what has been said I think we may fairly conclude, that the English language must have imbibed a strong tincture of the French, long before the age of Chaucer, and consequently that he ought not to be charged as the importer of words and phrases, which he only used after the example of his predecessors and in common with his contemporaries This was the real fact, and is capable of being demonstrated to any one, who will take the trouble of comparing the writings of Chaucer with those of[24] Robert of Gloucester and Robert of Brunne, who both lived before him, and with those of Sir John Mandeville and Wicliff, who lived at the same time with him. If we coud for a moment suppose the contrary; if we coud suppose that the English idiom, in the age of Chaucer, remained pure and unmixed, as it was spoken in the courts of Alfred or Egbert, and that the French was still a foreign, or at least a separate language; I would ask, whether it is credible, that a Poet, writing in English upon the most familiar subjects, would stuff his compositions with French words and phrases, which, upon the above supposition, must have been unintelligible to the greatest part of his readers; or, if he had been so very absurd, is it conceivable, that he should have immediately become not only the most admired, but also the most popular writer of his time and country?

---

short interval, or, perhaps, because the new practice of opening it in English was so well established, in the opinion of the Clerk, as not to need being marked by a special Entry.

The reasons assigned, in the preamble to this Statute, for having Pleas and Judgements in the English tongue might all have been urged, with at least equal force, for having the Laws themselves in that language. But the times were not yet ripe for that innovation. The English scale was clearly beginning to preponderate, but the slowness of its motion proves that it had a great weight to overcome.

[23] All the Parliamentary proceedings in English before 1422, the first of Henry VI. are the few which follow.

The Confession of Thomas Duke of Gloucester, taken at Calais by William Rickhill and recorded in Parliament, *inter Plac. Coron.* 21 Ric. II. n. 9. It is printed in Tyrrell, v. iii. p. 793.

Some passages in the Deposition of Richard II. printed at the end of Knighton, int. X Scriptores.

The ordinance between William Lord the Roos and Robert Tirwhitt, Justice of the King's Bench. 13 Hen. IV. n. 18.

A Petition of the Commons with the King's answer. 2 Hen. V. n. 22.

A Proviso in English inserted into a French grant of a Disme and Quinzisme. 9 Hen. V. n. 10.

At the beginning of the reign of Henry VI. the two languages seem to have been used indifferently. The Subsidy of Wolle, &c. was granted in English. 1 Hen. VI. n. 19. A Proviso in French was added by the Commons to the Articles for the Council of Regency, which are in English Ibid. n. 33. Even the Royal Assent was given to Bills in English. 2 Hen. VI. and n. 54. Be it ordeined as it is asked. Be it as it is axed.—and again, n. 55.

I have stated this matter so particularly, in order to shew, that when the French language ceased to be generally understood, it was gradually disused in Parliamentary proceedings; and from thence, I think, we may fairly infer, that while it was used in those proceedings, constantly and exclusively of the English, it must have been very generally understood.

[24] Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle has been published by Hearne, Oxf. 1724, faithfully, I dare say, but from incorrect MSS. The author speaks of himself [p. 560.] as living at the time of the Battle of Evesham in 1265; and from another passage [p. 224.] he seems to have lived beyond the year 1278, though his history ends in 1270. See Hearne's Pref. p. lxviii.

Robert Manning of Brunne, or Bourn, in Lincolnshire, translated into English rimes, from the French of Robert Grossetete, Bishop of Lincoln, a treatise called "*Manuel de Péchés*," as early as the year 1303. This work of his has never been printed, but is preserved among the Harleian MSS. n. 1701. and the Bodleian, n. 2323. He also translated from the French an history of England: the first part, or *Gesta Britonum*, from Master Wace: the remainder, to the death of Edward I. from Peter of Langtoft. His translation was finished in 1338. The latter part, with some extracts from the former, was printed by Hearne in 1725, from a single MS.

Sir John Mandeville's account of his Travells was written in 1356. In the last edition, Lond. 1727, the text is said to have been formed from a collation of several MSS. and seems to be tolerably correct.

Wicliff died in 1384. His translation of the New Testament was printed for the first time by Lewis, Lond. 1731. There is an immense Catalogue of other works, either really his or ascribed to him, still extant in MS. See his Life by Lewis; and Tanner, Bibl. Brit.

PART THE SECOND.

Having thus endeavoured to shew, in opposition to the ill-grounded censures of Verstegan and Skinner, that the corruption, or improvement, of the English language by a mixture of French was not originally owing to Chaucer, I shall proceed, in the second part of this Essay, to make some observations upon the most material peculiarities of that Norman-Saxon dialect, which I suppose to have prevailed in the age of Chaucer, and which, in substance, remains to this day the language of England.

§ I. By what means the French tongue was first introduced and propagated in this island has been sufficiently explained above; but to ascertain with any exactness the degrees, by which it insinuated itself and was ingrafted into the Saxon, would be a much more difficult task[25], for want of a regular series of the writings of approved authors transmitted to us by authentic copies. Luckily for us, as our concern is solely with that period when the incorporation of the two languages was completed, it is of no great importance to determine the precise time at which any word or phrase became naturalized; and for the same reason, we have no need to enquire minutely, with respect to the other alterations, which the Saxon language in its several stages appears to have undergone, how far they proceeded from the natural mutability of human speech, especially among an unlearned people, and how far they were owing to a successive conflux of Danish and Norman invaders.

§ II. The following observations therefore will chiefly refer to the state, in which the English language appears to have been about the time of Chaucer, and they will naturally divide themselves into two parts. The first will consider the remains of the antient Saxon mass, however defaced or disguised by various accidents; the second will endeavour to point out the nature and effects of the accessions, which, in the course of near three centuries, it had received from Normandy.

§ III. For the sake of method it will be convenient to go through the several parts of speech in the order, in which they are commonly ranged by Grammarians.

1. The Prepositive Article ꝼe, ꝼeo, þaꞇ, (which answered to the ὁ, ἡ, το, of the Greeks, in all its varieties of gender, case, and number,) had been long laid aside, and instead of it an indeclinable *the* was prefixed to all sorts of nouns, in all cases, and in both numbers.

2. The Declensions of the Nouns Substantive were reduced from six to one; and instead of a variety of cases in both numbers, they had only a Genitive case singular, which was uniformly deduced from the Nominative by adding to it *es;* or only *s*, if it ended in an *e* feminine; and that same form was used to express the [26] Plural number in all its cases: as, Nom. *Shour*, Gen. *Shoures*, Plur. *Shoures*. Nom. *Name*, Gen. *Names*, Plur. *Names*.

The Nouns Adjective had lost all distinction of Gender, Case, or Number.

---

[25] In order to trace with exactness the progress of any language, it seems necessary, 1. that we should have before us a continued series of authors; 2. that those authors should have been approved, as having written, at least, with purity; and 3. that their writings should have been correctly copied. In the English language, we have scarce any authors within the first century after the Conquest; of those, who wrote before Chaucer, and whose writings have been preserved, we have no testimony of approbation from their contemporaries or successors; and lastly, the Copies of their works, which we have received, are in general so full of inaccuracies, as to make it often very difficult for us to be assured, that we are in possession of the genuine words of the Author.

[26] It is scarce necessary to take notice of a few Plurals, which were expressed differently, though their number was greater in the time of Chaucer than it is now. Some of them seem to retain their termination in *en* from the second Declension of the Saxons; as oxen, eyen, hosen, &c. Others seem to have adopted it *euphoniæ gratiâ*; as, brethren, eyren, instead of, bꞃoðꞃu, æȝꞃu. And a few seem to have been always irregularly declined; as, men, wimmen, mice, lice, feet, &c. See Hickes, Gr. A. S. p. 11, 12.

3. The Primitive Pronouns retained one oblique case[27] in each number: as, *Ic*, or *I*; *We*: Obl. *Me*; *Us*:—*Thou*; *Ye*: Obl. *Thee*; *You*.—*He*, *She*; *Hi*[28], or *They*: Obl. *Him*, *Hire*; *Hem*, or *Them*.

Their Possessives were in the same state with the Adjectives; *Min*, *Thin*, *His*, *Hire*; *Oure*, *Youre*, *Hir*, or *Their*[29].

The Interrogative and Relative *Who* had a Genitive and Accusative case, *Whos*, and *Whom*, but no variety of Number.

On the contrary, the Demonstrative, *This*, and *That*, had a Plural expression, *Thise*, and *Tho*, but no variety of case.

The other words, which are often, though improperly, placed in the class of Pronouns, were all become undeclined, like the Adjectives; except, *Eyther*, alteruter; *Neyther*, neuter; *Other*, alter; which had a Genitive case Singular, *Eytheres*, *Neytheres*, *Otheres*: *Other*, alius, had a Genitive case singular, and a Plural number, *Otheres*; and *Aller* (a corruption of ealpa) was still in use, as the Genitive Plural of *Alle*[30].

---

[27] I take no notice here of the Genitive cases, *min*, *thin*, *oure*, *youre*, &c. as being at this time hardly ever distinguishable from Pronouns Possessive. How are we to know whether *min boke* should be rendered *liber mei*, or *liber meus*? In the Plural number however, in a few instances, the Genitive case seems to have retained its proper power. C. T. v. 825. oure aller cok—would be more naturally translated—*nostrûm* omnium gallus, than, *noster* omnium. And so in P. P. fol. cxi. Youre aller hele—*vestrûm* omnium salus; not, *vestra*.

[28] It is very difficult to say from whence, or why, the Pronouns, *They*, *Them*, *and Their*, were introduced into our language. The Saxon Pronouns, *Hi*, *Hem*, and *Hir*, seem to have been in constant use in the time of Robert of Gloucester. Sir John Mandeville and Chaucer use *They*, for *Hi*; but never, as I remember, (in the MSS. of authority) *Them*, or *Their*.

[29] The four last of these Possessive Pronouns were sometimes expressed a little differently viz. *Hires*, *Oures*, *Youres*, and *Hirs*, or *Theirs*; as they are still, when the Noun to which they belong is understood, or when they are placed after it in a sentence. To the question, Whose book is this? we answer, *Hers*, *Ours*, *Yours*, or *Theirs*. or we declare; This book is *Hers*, *Ours*, &c. I can hardly conceive that the final *s* in these words is a mark of the Possessive (or Genitive) case, as a very able writer [Short Introduction to English Grammar, p. 35, 6.] seems to be inclined to think; because in the instances just mentioned, and in all which I have been able to find or to imagine, I cannot discover the least trace of the usual powers of the Genitive case. The learned Wallis [Gram. Ang. c. 7.] has explained the use of these Pronouns without attempting to account for their form. He only adds; "Nonnulli, *hern*, *ourn*, *yourn*, *hirn*, dicunt, pro *hers*, *ours*, &c. sed barbarè, nec quisquam (credo) sic scribere solet." If it could be proved that these words were antiently terminated in *n*, we might be led to conjecture that they were originally abbreviations of *her own*, *our own*, &c. the *n* being afterwards softened into *s*, as it has been in many other words.

[30] It may be proper here to take a little notice of the Pronoun, or Pronominal Adjective, *Self*, which our best Grammarians, from Wallis downwards, have attempted to metamorphose into a Substantive. In the Saxon language, it is certain that *Sylf* was declined like other Adjectives, and was joined in construction with Pronouns Personal and Substantives, just as *ipse* is in Latin. They said, Ic sylf, Ego ipse; Min sylfes, mei ipsius; Me sylfne, me ipsum, &c. Petrus sylf, Petrus ipse, &c. [See Hickes, Gr. A. S. p. 26.] In the age of Chaucer, *Self*, like other Adjectives, was become undeclined. Though he writes, *Self*, *Selve*, and *Selven*, those varieties do not denote any distinction of case or number; for he uses indifferently, *himself* and *himselven*; *hemself* and *hemselven*. He joins it with Substantives, in the sense of *ipse*, as the Saxons did. [See v. 2862. In that *selve* grove. In illo ipso nemore. v. 4538. Thy *selve* neighebour. Ipse tuus vicinus.] But his great departure from the antient usage was with respect to the Pronouns Personal prefixed to *Self*. Instead of declining them through the cases which they still retained, he uses constantly, Myself, for, I self, and, Me self; Thyself, for, Thou self, and, Thee self; Him self and Hire self, for, He self and She self; and in the Plural number, Our self, for, We self, and Us self; Your self, for, Ye self, and You self; and Hem self, for, They self.

It would be vain to attempt to defend this practice of Chaucer upon any principles of reason or grammatical analogy. All that can be said for it is, that perhaps any regular practice was preferable to the confusion and uncertainty which seems to have prevailed before. Accordingly, the writers who succeeded him following his example, it became a rule, as I conceive, of the English language, that Personal Pronouns prefixed to *Self* were only used in one case in each number; viz. those of the First and Second Person in the Genitive case, according to the Saxon form, and those of the Third in the Accusative.

By degrees a custom was introduced of annexing *Self* to Pronouns in the Singular number only, and *Selves* in cor-

4. The verbs, at the time of which we are treating, were very nearly reduced to the simple state in which they are at present.

They had four Modes, as now; the Indicative, the Imperative, the Subjunctive, and the Infinitive; and only two expressions of Time, the Present and the Past. All the other varieties of Mode and Time were expressed by Auxiliary Verbs.

In the inflexions of their Verbs, they differed very little from us, in the Singular number: *I love, Thou lovest, He loveth:* but in the Plural they were not agreed among themselves; some[31] adhering to the old Saxon form; *We loveth, Ye loveth, They loveth;* and others adopting, what seems to have been, the Teutonic; *We loven, Ye loven, They loven.* In the Plural of the Past Tense the latter form prevailed universally: I loved, thou lovedest, he loved; *We loveden, Ye loveden, They loveden.*

The second person Plural in the Imperative Mode regularly terminated in *eth;* as, *Loveth* ye[32]; though the final consonants, according to the genius of the language, were frequently omitted, especially in verse.

The Saxon termination of the Infinitive in *an* had been long changed into *en; to loven, to liven,* &c. and they were beginning to drop the *n; to love, to live.*

The Participle of the Present Time began to be generally terminated in *ing;* as, *loving;* though the old form, which terminated in *ende,* or *ande,* was still in use; as, *lovende,* or *lovande.* The Participle of the Past time continued to be formed, as the Past time itself was, in *ed;* as, *loved;* or in some contraction of *ed*[33]; except among the irregular Verbs[34], where for the most part it terminated in *en;* as, *bounden, founden.*

---

ruption, I suppose, of *Selven*) to those in the Plural. This probably contributed to persuade our late Grammarians that *Self* was a Substantive; as the true English Adjective does not vary in the Plural number. Another cause of their mistake might be, that they considered *my, thy, our, your,* to which *self* is usually joined, as Pronouns *Possessive;* whereas I think it more probable that they were the Saxon Genitive cases of the *Personal* Pronouns. The metaphysical Substantive *Self,* of which our more modern Philosophers and Poets have made so much use, was unknown, I believe, in the time of Chaucer.

[31] In the long quotation from Trevisa (which see above, n. 21.) it may be observed, that all his Plural Verbs of the Present Tense terminate in *eth;* whereas in Sir John Mandeville and Chaucer they terminate almost as constantly in *en.*

[32] Mand. p. 281. And at certeyn houres—thei seyn to certeyn officeres—*Maketh pees* (i. e. Make ye silence). And than scin the Officeres, *Now pees! lysteneth* (i. e. listen ye)—In the following page, *Stondeth,* is used for, *Stand ye;* and *Putteth,* for *Put ye.*

[33] The methods, by which the final *ed* of the Past Tense and its Participle was contracted or abbreviated, in the age of Chaucer, were chiefly the following:

1. By throwing away the *d.*

This method took place in Verbs, whose last Consonant was *t,* preceded by a Consonant. Thus, *caste, coste, hurte, putte, slitte,* were used instead of, *casted, costed, hurted, putted, slitted.*

2. By transposing the *d.*

This was very generally done in Verbs, whose last Consonant was *d,* preceded by a Vowel. Thus, instead of, *reded leded, spreded, bleded, feded,* it was usual to write, *redde, ledde, spredde, bledde, fedde.*—And this same method of transposition, I apprehend, was originally applied to shorten those words which we now contract by Syncope; as, *lov'd, liv'd, smil'd, hear'd, fear'd,* which were antiently written *lovde, livde, smilde, herde, ferde.*

3. By transposing the *d* and changing it into *t.*

This method was used 1, in Verbs, whose last Consonant was *t,* preceded by a Vowel. Thus, *leted, sweted, meted,* were changed into, *lette, swette, mette.*—2, in Verbs, whose last Consonant was *d* preceded by a Consonant. Thus, *bended, bilded, girded,* were changed into, *bente, bilte, girte.*—And generally, in Verbs, in which *d* i changed into *t,* I conceive that *d* was first transposed; so that *dwelled, passed, dremed, feled, keped,* should be supposed to have been first changed into, *dwellde, passde, dremde, felde, kepde,* and then into, *dwelte, paste, dremte, felte, kepte.*

4. The last method, together with a change of the radical vowel, will account for the analogy of a species of Verbs, generally reputed anomalous, which form their Past Time and its Participle, according to modern orthography, in *ght.* The process seems to have been thus. *Bring, bringed, brongde, brogde, brogte; Think, thinked, thonkde, thokde, thokte; Teche, teched, tachde, tachte,* &c. Only *fought,* from *fighted,* seems to have been formed, by throwing

The greatest part of the Auxiliary Verbs were only in use in the Present and Past Tenses of their Indicative and Subjunctive Modes. They were inflected in those tenses like other Verbs, and were prefixed to the Infinitive Mode of the Verb to which they were Auxiliary. I *shall* loven; I *will*, or *woll*, loven; I *may*, or *mow*, loven; I *can*, or *con*, loven, &c. We *shullen* loven; We *willen*, or *wollen*, loven; We *mowen* loven; We *connen* loven, &c. In the Past tense, I[35] *shulde* loven; I *wolde* loven; I *mighte*, or *moughte* loven; I *coude* loven, &c. We *shulden*, we *wolden*, we *mighten*, or *moughten*, we *couden* loven, &c.

The Auxiliary *To Haven* was a complete Verb, and, being prefixed to the Participle of the Past time, was used to express the Preterperfect and Preterpluperfect Tenses. I *have* loved, Thou *havest*, or *hast* loved, He *haveth*, or *hath* loved; We *haven*, or *han* loved, &c. I *hadde*[36] loved, thou *haddest* loved, he *hadde* loved; We, ye, they, *hadden* loved.

The Auxiliary *To ben* was also a complete Verb, and being prefixed to the Participle of the Past time, with the help of the other Auxiliary Verbs, supplied the place of the whole Passive voice, for which the Saxon language had no other form of expression. I *am*, thou *art*, he *is* loved; We, ye, they, *aren*, or *ben* loved. I *was*, thou *wast*, he *was* loved; We, ye, they, *weren* loved[37].

5. With respect to the indeclinable parts of Speech, it will be sufficient to observe here, that many of them still remained pure Saxon: the greatest number had undergone a slight change of a letter or two; and the more considerable alterations, by which some had been disfigured, were fairly deducible from that propensity to abbreviation, for which the inhabitants of this island have been long remarkable, though perhaps not more justly so than their neighbours.

§ IV. Such was, in general, the state of the Saxon part of the English language when Chaucer began to write; let us now take a short view of the accessions, which it may be supposed to have received at different times from Normandy.

As the language of our Ancestors was complete in all its parts, and had served them for the purposes of discourse and even of composition in various kinds, long before they had any intimate acquaintance with their French neighbours, they had no call from necessity, and

---

away the *d* (according to method 1.) and changing the radical Vowel. See instances of similar contractions in the Francic language. Hickes, Gramm. Fr. Th. p. 66.

[35] I consider those verbs only as irregular, in which the Past Time and its Participle differ from each other. Their varieties are too numerous to be particularly examined here; but I believe there are scarce any, in which the deviations from the regular form will not appear to have been made by some method of contraction, or abbreviation, similar to those which have been pointed out in the last note among the Regular Verbs. The common termination of the Participle in *en* is clearly a substitution for *ed*, probably for the sake of a more agreeable sound; and it is often shortened, as *ed* has been shewn to be, by transposition. Thus, *drawen*, *knowen*, *boren*, *stolen*, were changed into *drawne*, *knowne*, *borne*, *stolne*.

Shulde and *Wolde* are contracted from *Shulled*, and *Wolled*, by transposing the *d*, according to method 2.

Mighte and *Moughte* are formed from *maghed* and *moghed*, according to method 3. *Maghed*, *maghde*, *maghte*; *Moghed*, *moghde*, *moghte*.

Coude is from *conned*, by transposition of the *d*, and softening the *n* into *u*. It is often written *couthe*, and always so, I believe, when it is used as a Participle. In the same manner Bishop Douglas, and other Scottish writers, use *Begouth* as the Præterit of *Begin*. *Begonned*, *begonde*, *begoude*, *begouthe*.

[36] *Hadde* is contracted from *Haved*, as *made* is from *maked*. See Hickes, Gram. Fr. Th. p. 66.

[37] The verb *To do* is considered by Wallis, and other later Grammarians, as an Auxiliary Verb. It is so used, though very rarely, by Chaucer. [See v. 14742,4.] He more commonly uses it transitively: [v. 10074. Do stripen me. *Faites me dépouiller.*—v. 10075. Do me drenche. *Faites me noyer.*] but still more frequently to save the repetition of a verb. [v. 269.

His eyen twinkeled in his hed aright,
As DON the sterres in a frosty night.]

Dr. Hickes has taken notice that *do* was used in this last manner by the Saxons: [Gr. A. S. p. 77.] and so was *faire* by the French, and indeed is still. It must be confessed, that the exact power, which *do*, as an auxiliary, now has in our language, is not easy to be defined, and still less to be accounted for from analogy.

consequently no sufficient inducement, to alter its original and radical constitutions, or even its customary forms. Accordingly, we have just seen, that, in all the essential parts of Speech, the characteristical features of the Saxon idiom were always preserved; and we shall see presently, that the crowds of French words, which from time to time were imported, were themselves made subject, either immediately or by degrees, to the laws of that same idiom.

§ v. The words which were thus imported, were chiefly Nouns Substantive, Adjectives, Verbs, and Participles. The Adverbs, which are derived from French Adjectives, seem to have been formed from them after they were Anglicised, as they have all the Saxon termination *lick* or *ly*[38], instead of the French *ment*. As to the other indeclinable parts of Speech, our language, being sufficiently rich in its own stores, has borrowed nothing from France, except perhaps an Interjection or two.

The Nouns Substantive in the French language (as in all the other languages derived from the Latin) had lost their Cases long before the time of which we are treating; but such of them as were naturalised here, seem all to have acquired a Genitive case, according to the corrupted Saxon form, which has been stated above. Their Plural number was also new modelled to the same form, if necessary; for in Nouns ending in *e* feminine, as the greater part of the French did, the two languages were already agreed. Nom. *Flour*. Gen. *Floures*. Plur. *Floures*. Nom. *Dame*. Gen. *Dames*. Plur. *Dames*.

On the contrary, the Adjectives, which at home had a distinction of Gender and Number, upon their naturalisation here, seem to have been generally stript of both, and reduced to the simple state of the English Adjective, without Case, Gender, or Number.

The French Verbs were obliged to lay aside all their differences of Conjugation. *Accorder*, *souffrir*, *recevoir*, *descendre*, were regularly changed into—*accorden*, *suffren*, *receiven*, *descenden*. They brought with them only two Tenses, the Present and the Past; nor did they retain any singularity of Inflexion, which coud distinguish them from other Verbs of Saxon growth.

The Participle indeed of the Present time, in some Verbs, appears to have still preserved its original French form; as, *usant*, *suffisant*, &c.

The Participle of the Past time adopted, almost universally, the regular Saxon termination in *ed*; as *accorded*, *suffred*, *received*, *descended*. It even frequently assumed the prepositive particle ȝe, (or y, as it was latterly written,) which, among the Saxons, was very generally, though not peculiarly, prefixed to that Participle.

§ vi. Upon the whole, I believe it may be said with truth, that, at the time which we are considering, though the form of our Language was still Saxon, the matter was in a great measure French. The novelties of all kinds, which the Revolution in 1066 had introduced, demanded a large supply of new terms; and our Ancestors very naturally took what they wanted, from the Language which was already familiar to a considerable part of the Community. Our Poets in particular, who have generally the principal share in modelling a Language, found it their interest to borrow as many words as they conveniently coud from France. As they were for a long time chiefly Translators, this expedient saved them the trouble of hunting for correspondent terms in Saxon. The French words too, being the remains of a polished language, were smoother and slid easier into metre than the Saxon, which had never undergone any regular cultivation: their final syllables chimed together with more frequent consonancies, and their Accents were better adapted to Riming Poetry. But more of this in the next Part.

[38] As *rarely*, *continually*, *verally*, *bravely*, &c. which correspond to the French adverbs, rarement, continuellement, veraiment, bravement, &c.

PART THE THIRD.

we proceed in the third and last part of this Essay, in which we are to consider the on of Chaucer, it may be useful to premise a few observations upon the state of etry antecedent to his time.

the Saxons had a species of writing, which differed from their common prose, and ered by themselves as Poetry [39], is very certain ; but it seems equally certain, that ositions of that kind were neither divided into verses of a determinate number of or embellished with what we call Rime [40]. There are no traces, I believe, to be

unt which Beda has given of Cædmon [Eccl. Hist. l. iv. c. 24.] is sufficient to prove this. He repeatedly positions of Cædmon *carmina—poemata*—and in one place, *versus:* which words in the Saxon transndered Leoþ,—Leoþ ſonȝeſ, or ſonȝeſ—and ꝼeꝼſ : and *ars canendi* is translated, Leoþ ınȝ cꝼæꝼt.

in his Life of Alfred, speaks of *Saxonica poemata* and *Saxonica carmina* [p. 16. 43.] and most probably *per successiones temporum detritæ*, which Malmesbury cites in his History, l. 11. p. 52. were in the ge. The same writer [l. v. de Pontif. edit. Gale.] mentions a *Carmen trivale* of Aldhelm (the author of m *de Virginitate*, who died in 709,) as *adhuc vulgo cantitatum ;* and he quotes the testimony of King *Liber manualis*, or *Hand-boc*, as saying, "that no one was ever equal to Aldhelm in English Poetry."

se circumstances are evident from the most cursory view of the several specimens of Saxon Poetry, has exhibited in his Gram. Ang. Sax. c. xxi. and they are allowed by that learned writer himself. Unrer, as it should seem, to leave his favourite language without some system of versification, he supposes, ns observed the quantity of syllables in their verses, "though perhaps," he adds, "not so strictly as the and Latin Poets."

ree reasons for this supposition. 1. Because they did not use Rime. 2. Because they transposed their an unnatural manner. "Hoc autem cur facerent Anglo-Saxonum Poetæ, nulla, ut videtur, alia assignari quam quæ, ut idem facerent, Græcos et Latinos poetas coegit; nempe Metri Lex." 3. Because they had er of dissyllable and polysyllable words, which were fit for metrical feet.

ecious these reasons may appear, they are certainly far from conclusive, even if we had no monuments of remaining; but in the present case, I apprehend, the only satisfactory proof would have been to have of the great heap of Poetical compositions in the Saxon language, some regular metrical verses; that is, of words, similar to each other in the nature and order of their component syllables, and occurring ntinued series, or at stated intervals. If all external proofs of the nature of the Roman Poetry were lost, f Virgil or Horace would be sufficient to convince us, that their metres were regulated by the quantity of l if Cædmon had really written in a metre regulated by the quantity of syllables, a few of his lines must us the same conviction with respect to the general laws of his versification.

part, I confess myself unable to discover any material distinction of the Saxon Poetry from Prose, ter pomp of diction, and a more stately kind of march.

rs affected a certain pomp of style in all their compositions. Angli (says Malmesbury, l. i. p. 13.) tare amant. And this affectation, I suspect, was the true cause of their so frequently inverting the of their words, especially in Poetry. The obscurity arising from these inversions had the appearance of they were not owing to the constraint of any metrical Laws (as Hickes supposes) may be presumed from mmonly used in Prose, and even in Latin Prose, by Saxon writers. Ethelwerd, an Historian descended gree from King Ethelred [inter Script. post Bedam, p. 831—850.], is full of them. The following passage if literally translated, would read very like Saxon poetry. "Abstrahuntur tunc | ferventes fide | anno ibernia stirpe | tres viri lecti ; | furtim consuunt lembum | taurinis byrsis ; | alimentum sibi | hebdopplent ; elevant dies | per vela septem totidemque noctes," &c.

ee any marks of studied alliteration in the old Saxon Poetry; so that we might attribute the introduction ice to the Danes, if we were certain, that it made a part of the Scaldic versification at the time of the nents in England.

at may have been, Giraldus Cambrensis [Descr. Camb. p. 889.] speaks of *Annomination*, which he what we call *Alliteration*, as the favourite rhetorical figure of both the Welsh and English in his time. hoc verborum ornatu duæ nationes, Angli scil. et Cambri, in omni sermone exquisito utuntur ut nihil ab dictum, nullum nisi rude et agreste censeatur eloquium, si non schematis hujus limâ plene fuerit It is plain that Alliteration must have had very powerful charms for the ears of our ancestors, as we

found of either Rime or Metre in our language, till some years after the Conquest; so that I should apprehend we must have been obliged for both to the Normans, who very early[41] distinguished themselves by poetical performances in their Vulgar tongue.

The Metres which they used, and which we seem to have borrowed from them, were plainly copied from the Latin[42] rythmical verses, which, in the declension of that language, were current in various forms among those, who either did not understand, or did not regard, the true quantity of syllables; and the practice of Riming[43] is probably to be deduced from the

find that the Saxon Poetry, by the help of this embellishment alone, even after it had laid aside its pompous phraseology, was able to maintain itself, without Rime or Metre, for several centuries. See Dr. Percy's Essay on the Metre of Pierce Plowman's Visions. Rel. of Antient Poetry, vol. ii.

[41] I cannot find that the French Antiquaries have been able to produce any Poetry in any of the dialects of their language, of an earlier date than the Conquest of England, or indeed than the beginning of the XIIth Century. However we read of a Thibaud de Vernun, Canon of Rouen, who, before the year 1053, "multorum gesta Sanctorum, sed et Stⁱ Wandregesili, a suâ latinitate transtulit, atque in communis linguæ usum satis facunde refudit, ac sic, *ad quamdam tinnuli rythmi similitudinem, urbanas ex illis cantilenas edidit.* [De Mirac. Stⁱ Vulframni. Auctore Monacho Fontanell. tempt. Will. I. ap. Dacherii Acta SS. Ord. Ben. t. iii. p. 379.] It is probable too, that the "*vulgares cantus,*" which, according to Raimond de Agiles [Gesta Dei, p. 180.], were composed against Arnoulph, a Chaplain of the Duke of Normandy, in the first Croisade, were in the French language; and there can be little doubt that William IX, Duke of Aquitain, upon his return from Jerusalem, in 1101, made use of his native tongue, when "*miserias captivitatis suæ, ut erat jocundus et lepidus, multotiens retulit rythmicis versibus cum facetis modulationibus.*" Ord. Vital. l. x. p. 793. The History of the taking of Jerusalem, which is said to have been written by the Chevalier Gregoire Bechada, of Tours in Limoges, *maternâ linguâ, rythmo vulgari, ut populus pleniter intelligeret,*" [Labbe, Bibl. Nov. t. ii. p. 296.] has not yet been brought to light; so that probably the oldest French Poem of any length now extant is a translation of *Bestiarius* by Phillipe de Thaun, it being addressed to Aliz (Adeliza of Louvain) the second Queen of our Henry I.

There is a copy of this Poem among the *Cotton* MSS. Nero. A. v. The authors of the *Histoire Littéraire de la France,* t. ix. p. 173—90. suppose it to have been written about 1125, that is, thirty years before *Le Brut,* which Fauchet had placed at the head of his list of French Poems.

I shall take occasion in another place to shew, that the real author of *Le Brut* was Wace (the same who wrote the *Roman de Rou,*) and not Wistace, as Fauchet calls him.

[42] The Latin Rythmical verses resembled the Metrical in the number of syllables only, without any regard to quantity. "Arma cano virumque qui primus Trojæ ab oris" would pass for a very good Rythmical Hexameter. The greatest part however of these compositions were in imitation of the Iambic and Trochaic metres; and in them, if the Accents fell luckily, the unlearned ear would often be as well pleased as if the laws of Quantity were observed. The two Rythmical Hymns quoted by Beda [De Metris, edit. Putsch. p. 2380.] are sufficient to prove this. The first, he observes, "*ad instar Iambici metri pulcherrime factus est.*"

O rex æterne Domine
Rerum creator omnium, &c.

The other is "*ad formam metri Trochaici.*"

Apparebit repentina dies magna Domini
Fur obscurâ velut nocte improvisos occupans.

In the former of these Hymns, "*Domine,*" to a modern ear at least, sounds as well as "*nomine;*"—and in the latter, "*dies*" and "*velut,*" being accented upon their first Syllables, affect us no other wise than "*dices*" and "*velum*" would have done.

From such Latin Rythms, and chiefly those of the Iambic form, the present Poetical measures of all the nations of Roman Europe are clearly derived. Instead of long and short Syllables, the Feet of our Poetry are composed of Syllables accented and unaccented, or rather of Syllables strongly and less strongly accented; and hence it is, that we have so little variety of Feet, and consequently of Metres; because the possible combinations of Syllables accented and unaccented are, from the nature of speech, much more limited in point of number, than the combinations of long and short Syllables were in the Greek and Latin languages.

[43] We see evident marks of a fondness for Rime in the Hymns of S. Ambrosius and S. Damasus, as early as the fourth Century. One of the Hymns of Damasus, which begins,

"Martyris ecce dies Agathæ
Virginis emicat eximiæ," &c.

regularly rimed throughout. Prudentius, who had a more classical taste, seems studiously to have avoided Rimes;

›riginal, as we find that practice to have prevailed in Ecclesiastical Hymns, and other sitions, in Latin, some centuries before Otfrid of Weissenberg, the first known Rimer in the vulgar European dialects.

. I wish it were in my power to give a regular history of the progress which our tors made in this new style of versification; but[44], except a few lines in the Saxon icle upon the death of William the Conquerour, which seem to have been intended for of the Modern fashion, and a short Canticle, which, according to Matthew Paris[45], the

---

alius and Fortunatus, in the fifth and sixth Centuries, use them frequently in their Hymns. See their works, Hymn of the latter ap. Fabric. Bib. Med. Ætat. v. FORTUNATUS.

arned Muratori, in his Dissertation *de Rythmicâ Veterum Poesi*, [Antiq. Med. Ævi, Dissert. xl.] has collected a vast heap of examples, which prove that Rimes were very generally used in Hymns, Sequences, and other compositions in Latin, in the VIIth, VIIIth, and IXth Centuries; so that for my own part I think it as probable that the Poets in the vulgar languages (who first appeared about the IXth Century) borrowed their Rimes e Latin Poetry of that age, as it is evident that they did the forms of their versification.

of Weissenberg, the earliest Rimer that is known in any of the modern Languages, about the year 870, calls a the style of the Latin Grammarians, *Schema omœoteleuton* [Præf. ad Liutbert. ap. Schilter. Thes. Antiq. t. i. p. 11.] And when the Monk, who has been cited in n. 41. says, that Thibaud de Vernun composed his *ad quamdam tinnuli rythmi similitudinem*," he must mean, I think, that he composed them "in imitation of jingling Rythm." I say, *Latin*, or at least some *foreign*, Rythm, because otherwise he would rather have said *tinnulo*. The addition of the epithet *tinnulus* seems to shew plainly enough, that *Rythmus* alone did not nify what we call *Rime*.

liam of Malmesbury [de Gest. Pont. Angl. l. iii. p. 271.] has preserved two Riming verses of Aldred, Archf York, which that Prelate threw out against one Urse, Sheriff of Worcestershire, not long after the Conquest. thou Urse—Have thou God's curse." "*Vocaris Ursus—Habeas Dei maledictionem.*" Malmesbury says, that ts this English, "*quod Latina verba non sicut Anglica concinnitati respondent.*" The Concinnity, I suppose, ve consisted in the Rime, and would hardly have been thought worth repeating, if Rime in English had not n a novelty.

nes in the Saxon Chronicle, to which I mean to refer, are in p. 191. ed Gibs. The passage begins,

Ꝑarcelaꝑ he let ꝑyncean.
ꝑeaꝑme men ꝑriðe ꝑpencean—

lines are not in Rime; but I shall set down a few, in English characters, which I think coud not have chimed so exactly by mere accident.

Thet he nam be rihte
And mid mycelan un-rihte
Of his leode
For littelre neode—
He sætte mycel deor-frith,
And he lægde laga thei with—
He forbead tha heortas,
Swylce eac tha baras;
Swa swithe he lufode tha hea-deor
Swylce he wære heora fæder.
Eac he sætte be tham haran,
That hi mosten freo faran—

cluding lines are—

Se æl-mihtiga God
Kithe his saule mild-heortnisse
And do him his synna forgifenesse.

riter of this part of the Chronicle (as he tells us himself, p. 189., had *seen* the Conquerour.

t. Angl. p. 100. Godric died in 1170, so that, according to tradition, the Canticle was prior to that period. The nza being incorrectly printed, I shall only transcribe the last.—

Seinte Marie, Christes bur,
Meidenes clenhad, moderes flur,
Dilie mine sennen, rixe in min mod,
Bringe me to winne with selfe God—

blessed Virgin was pleased to dictate to Godric, an Hermite near Durham, I have not been able to discover any attempts at Riming Poetry, which can with probability be referred to an earlier period than the reign of Henry the second. In that reign Layamon[46], a Priest of Ernleye near Severn, as he calls himself, translated (chiefly) from the French of Wace[47], a

Hoc Canticum (says M. P.) *potest hoc modo in Latinum transferri.*

Sancta Maria, Christi thalamus,
virginalis puritas, matris flos,
dele mea crimina, regna in mente meâ,
duc me ad fœlicitatem cum solo Deo.

Upon the authority of this translation I have altered *pinne* (as it is in the print) to *winne*. The Saxon *p* is often mistaken for a p.

[46] This work of Layamon is extant among the Cotton MSS. Cal. A. ix. A much later copy, in which the author, by a natural corruption was called *Laweman*, was destroyed by the fire. There is an account of both copies in Wanley's Cat. MSS. Septent. p. 228, and p. 237.

The following short extract from fol. 7, 8. containing an account of the Sirens, which Brutus met with in his voyage, will serve to support what is said in the text of this Author's intermixing Rimes with his prose.

Ther heo funden the Merminnen,
That beoth deor of muchele ginnen.
Wismen hit thunchet ful iwis,
Bineothe thon gurdle hit thunceth fisc.
Theos habbeth swa murie song,
Ne beo tha dai na swa long,
Ne bith na man weri
Heora songes to heran—

[47] The French Clerk, whom Layamon professes to have followed in his history, is called by Wanley [Cat. MSS. Sept. p. 228.] *Wate;* as if poor *Maistre Wace* were doomed to have his name perpetually mistaken. Fauchet, and a long string of French Antiquaries, have agreed to call him *Wistace*. I shall here, in justice to *Maistre Wace*, (for whom I have a great respect, not only as a very antient but as a very ingenious Rimer,) state my reasons shortly for believing, that he was the real author of that translation in French verse of Geffrey of Monmouth's Romance, which is commonly called *Le Brut*.

In the first place his name is distinctly written in the text of three MSS. of very considerable antiquity. Two of them are in the Museum, viz. *Cotton*. Vitell. A. x. and *Reg*. 13 A. xxi. The third is at Cambridge, in the Library of Bennet College, n. 58. In a fourth MS. also in the Museum, *Harl*. 6508. it is written *Gazce*, and *Gace*, by a substitution of G for W, very usual in the French language.

Secondly, in the MS. abovementioned of Layamon's history Cal. A. ix. if I may trust my own eyes, the name is *Wace;* and not *Wate*, as Wanley read it. The Saxon ȣ is not very unlike a c. What Layamon has said further, "that this Wace was a French Clerk, and presented his book to Alienor, the Queen of Henry" [the Second,] agrees perfectly well with the date of *Le Brut* (in 1155, according to all the copies) and with the account which Wace himself, in his *Roman de Rou*, has given of his attachment to Henry.

Thirdly, in a subsequent translation of *Le Brut*, which was made by Robert of Brunne in the beginning of the XIVth Century, he repeatedly names *Mayster Wace*, as the author (or rather translator from the Latin) of the French History. See *Hearne's* App. to Pref. to *Peter Langtoft*, p. xcviii.

In opposition to this strong evidence in favour of *Wace*, we have nothing material, except the MS. of *Le Brut* quoted by Fauchet [*de la Langue Françoise*, l. ii.;], in which, according to his citation, the author is called *Wistace*. The later French writers, who have called him so, I apprehend, have only followed Fauchet. The Reader will judge, whether it is not more probable, that the writer of the MS. or even Fauchet himself, may have made a little slip in this matter, than that so many MSS. as I have quoted above, and the successive testimonies of LAYAMON and ROBERT OF BRUNNE, should have concurred in calling the author of *Le Brut* WACE, if that had not been his true name.

I will just add, that *La vie de Seint Nicholas*, which is frequently quoted by *Hickes* [Gr. A. S. p. 146. 149. et al.] was probably a work of this same *Wace*, as appears from the following passage. [MS. Bodl. 1687. v. 17. from the end.]

Ci faut le livre *mestre Guace*,
Qil ad de Seint Nicholas fait,
De Latin en Romaunz estreit
A Osberd le fiz Thiout,
Qui Seint Nicholas mout amout.—

And I should suspect, that *Le Martyre de St. George en vers François par Robert Guaco*, mentioned by M. Lebeuf as

history of the Britons, entitled "Le Brut," which Wace himself, about the year . translated from the Latin of Geffrey of Monmouth. Though the greatest part of of Layamon resemble the old Saxon Poetry, without Rime or metre, yet he often s a number of short verses, of unequal lengths but riming together pretty exactly, ne places he has imitated not unsuccessfully the regular octosyllable measure of his iginal.

t may seem extraordinary, after these proofs, that the art of Riming was not or unpractised in this country in the time of Henry II, that we should be obliged through a space of above an hundred years, without being able to meet with a single English Rimes, whom we know to have written in that interval. The case I suspect een this. The scholars of that age (and there were many who might fairly be called English dominions abroad [48] as well as at home) affected to write only [49] in Latin, e do not find that they ever composed, in verse or prose, in any other language. On hand they, who meant to recommend themselves by their Poetry to the favour of took care to write in French, the only language which their patrons understood; e it is, that we see so many French poems [50], about that time, either addressed directly ncipal persons at the English court, or at least written on such subjects as we may, o have been most likely to engage their attention. Whatever therefore of English as produced, in this infancy of the art, being probably the work of illiterate authors

e Bibl. Colbert. Cod. 3745 [Mem. de l'Acad. D. J. et B. L. t. xvii. p. 731.] ought to be ascribed to the same *uaco* is a very strange name. The Christian name of Wace was *Robert*. See Huet, Orit. de Caen, p. 412.

lowing passage of Roger de Hoveden [p. 672.] gives a striking description of the extent of the English n the time of Richard I. *Sciendum est quod tota terra, quæ est ab Anglia usque in Hispaniam, secus cet Normannia, Britannia, Pictavia, est de dominio Regis Angliæ.* The Kings of France at that time ssessed of an inch of territory upon the coasts of the Ocean.

be sufficient to name John of Salisbury, Peter of Blois, Joseph of Exeter, Gerald Barry, Nigell Wircker, auf. I should add to this list Walter Map, if there were not a tradition, not entirely destitute of that he was the author of the *Roman de Saint Graal* in French. I find this in an old MS. of Tristan, Bib. L. p. antep. *Quant Boort ot conte laventure del Saint Graal, teles come eles estoient avenues, eles furent rit, gardees en lamere de Salibieres, dont Mestre Galtier Map l'estrest a faire son livre du Saint Graal, por y Herri son sengnor, qui fist lestorie tralater del Latin en Romanz.* The adventure of the *Saint Graal*, ritten upon a very different plan from the other Romances of the Round Table, and is likely enough to rom an Ecclesiastick, though rather, I confess, from a graver one than Walter Map may be supposed to The French Romance, from which our Romance called "*Mort d'Arthur*" is translated, seems to be an jumble of *Le Brut*, *Lancelot*, *Tristan*, the *Saint Graal*, and some other Romances of less note, which pprehend, originally separate works.

laire, by *Philippe de Thaun*, addressed to Queen Adeliza; *Le Brut* and *Le Rôman de Rou*, by *Wace*, have med above. Besides the *Roman de Rou*, there is another Chronicle of Normandy in French verse by *eit*, compiled by order of Henry II. MS. *Harl.* 1717. The same *Beneit* was, perhaps, the author of the *homas*, MS. *Harl.* 3775. though he there calls himself

"*Frere Beneit, le pecheour,*
"*ove les neirs dras*"—

of a copy of *Le Brut*, Bib. *Reg.* 13 A. xxi. there is a Continuation of the History to the death of William ame Metre, by a *Geffrei Gaimar*, which escaped the observation of Mr. Casley; and at the end of another A. x. the History is continued by an anonymous author to the accession of King John.

. composed himself in French. A specimen of his Poetry has been published by Mr. Walpole, Cat. of ors, v. i. And his Chancellor, William Bishop of Ely (who, as has been observed before, "was totally the English language"), was by no means behindhand with his Master in his encouragement of French f this Bishop the passage in Hoveden is to be understood, which Mr. Walpole has applied to the King is part of a letter of Hugh Bishop of Coventry, who, speaking of the *Bishop of Ely*, says that HE, "*ad et famam sui nominis, emendicata carmina et rythmos adulatorios comparabat, et* de regno Francorum *oculatores muneribus allexerat, ut de illo canerent in plateis; et jam dicebatur ubique, quod non erat talis* oveden, p. 103.

and circulating only among the vulgar [51], we need not be much surprised that no more of it has been transmitted down to posterity.

§ IV. The learned Hickes, however, has pointed out to us two very curious pieces, which may with probability be referred to this period. The first of them is a Paraphrase of the Gospel Histories, entitled *Ormulum* [52], by one *Orm*, or *Ormin*. It seems to have been considered as mere Prose by Hickes and by Wanley, who have both given large extracts from it; but, I apprehend, every reader, who has an ear for metre, will easily perceive that it is written very

[51] To these causes we may probably impute the loss of those Songs upon Hereward (the last perhaps of the Saxon heroes,) which, according to Ingulphus, "were sung about the streets" in his time. Hist. Croyl. p. 68. Robert of Brunne also mentions "a Rime" concerning Grymo the Fisher, the founder of Grymesby; Hanelok the Dane; and his wife Goldeburgh, daughter to a King Athelwold; who all now, together with their bard,

—illacrymabiles
Urgentur ignotique longâ
Nocte.—

See Translation of Peter of Langtoft, p. 25. and Camden's Brit. p. 569.

[52] The Ormulum seems to be placed by Hickes among the first writings after the Conquest [Gram. Ang. Sax. c. xxii. p. 165.], but, I confess, I cannot conceive it to have been earlier than the reign of Henry II. There is a peculiarity in the author's orthography, which consists in doubling the Consonants; e. g. brother, he writes, *brotherr*; after, *afterr*, &c. He has done this by design, and charges those who shall copy his book to be very careful to write those letters twice, which he has written so, as otherwise, he assures them, "they will not write the word right." Hickes has taken notice of this peculiarity, but has not attempted to explain the author's reasons for it; and indeed, without a more perfect knowledge than we now probably can have of the Saxon pronunciation, they seem totally inexplicable. In the few lines, which I think it necessary to quote here as a specimen of the Metre, I shall venture (first begging Ormin's pardon for disregarding his injunction) to leave out the superfluous letters, and I shall also for my own ease as well as that of the reader transcribe them in modern characters. The first lines of Wanley's extract from MS. *Bod.* Junius. 1. [Cat. Codd. MSS. Septent. p. 59.] will answer my purpose as well as any other.

Nu, brother Walter, brother min after the fleshes kinde,
And brother min i Cristendom thurh fulluht and thurh trowthe,
And brother min i Godes hus yet o the thride wise,
Thurh that wit hafen taken ba an reghel boc to folghen
Under kanunkes-had and lif swa sum Sant Awstin sette,
Ic hafe don swa sum thu bad, and *forbed* [a] te thin wille,
Ic hafe wend intil English godspelles halighe lare,
After that little wit that me min Drihten hafeth lened—

The reader will observe, that, in calling these verses of fifteen syllables, I consider the words—*kinde*, *trowthe*, *wise*, *sette*, *wille*, *lare*—as dissyllables.

The laws of Metre require that they should be so considered, as much as *folghen* and *lened*: and for the same reason *thride* in ver. 3 and *hafe* in ver. 6 and 7. are to be pronounced as consisting of two syllables.

It is the more extraordinary that neither Hickes nor Wanley should have perceived that Ormin wrote in Metre, as he himself mentions his having added words for the sake of *filling* his *Rime*, or *Verse*, for he calls it by both those names in the following passages:

Ic hafe sett her o this boc among Godspelles wordes
All thurh me selfen manig word, the *Rime* swa to *fillen* —

And again,

And ic ne mihte noht min *fers* ay with Godspelles wordes
Wel *fillen* all, and all forthi sholde ic wel ofte nede
Among Godspelles wordes don min word, min *fers* to *fillen*—

It is scarce necessary to remark, that *Rime* is here to be understood in its original sense, as denoting the whole verse, and not merely the consonancy of the final syllables. In the second quotation *fers*, or *verse*, is substituted for it as a synonymous term. Indeed I doubt whether, in the time of Ormin, the word *Rime* was, in any language, used singly to convey the idea of Consonant terminations.

[a] r. *forthed*. MS.

exactly in verses of fifteen syllables, without Rime, in imitation of the most common species of the Latin Tetrameter Iambic. The other piece[53], which is a moral Poem upon old age, &c. is in Rime, and in a metre much resembling the former, except that the verse of fifteen syllables is broken into two, of which the first should regularly contain eight and the second seven syllables; but the metre is not so exactly observed, at least in the copy which Hickes has followed, as it is in the *Ormulum*.

§ v. In the next interval, from the latter end of the reign of Henry III, to the middle of the fourteenth century, when we may suppose Chaucer was beginning to write, the number of English Rimers seems to have increased very much. Besides several, whose names we know[54], it is probable that a great part of the anonymous Authors, or rather Translators[55], of the

[53] A large extract from this Poem has been printed by Hickes [Gram. Ang. Sax. c. xxiv. p. 222.], but evidently from very incorrect MSS. It begins thus:

Ic am nu elder thanne ic wes
A wintre and ec a lore;
Ic ealdi more thanne ic dede,
Mi wit oghte to bi more.

[54] Robert of Gloucester and Robert of Brunne have been mentioned already.

To these may be added Richard Rolle, the hermite of Hampole, who died in 1349, after having composed a large quantity of English rimes. See Tanner, Bib. Brit. Art. HAMPOLE.—Laurence Minot, who has left a collection of Poems upon the principal events of the former part of the reign of Edward III. MS. *Cotton.* Galba. E. ix.—Within the same period flourished the two Poets, who are mentioned with great commendations by Robert of Brunne [App. to Pref. to Peter Langt. p. xcix.] under the names "Of Erceldoun and of Kendale." We have no memorial, that I know, remaining of the latter, besides this passage; but the former I take to have been the famous Thomas Leirmouth, of Ercildoun (or Ersilton, as it is now called, in the shire of Merch,) who lived in the time of Edward I, and is generally distinguished by the honourable addition of "The Rhymour." As the learned Editor of "Ancient Scottish Poems, Edinburgh, 1770," has, for irrefragable reasons, deprived this Thomas of a Prophecy in verse, which had usually been ascribed to him, [see Mackenzie, Art. THOMAS RHYMOUR,] I am inclined to make him some amends by attributing to him a Romance of "Sir Tristrem;" of which Robert of Brunne, an excellent judge! [in the place above cited] says,

Over gestes it has th'esteem,
Over all that is or was,
If men it sayd as made THOMAS.

[55] See Dr. Percy's curious *Catalogue of English Metrical Romances*, prefixed to the third Volume of *Reliques of ancient Poesy*. I am inclined to believe that we have no English Romance, prior to the age of Chaucer, which is not a translation or imitation of some earlier French Romance. The principal of those, which, being built upon English stories, bid the fairest for having been originally composed in English, are also extant in French. A considerable fragment of *Hornchild*, or *Dan Horn* as he is there called, is to be found in French Alexandrines in MS. *Harl.* 527. The first part of *Guy of Warwick* is in French, in the octosyllable metre, in MS. *Harl.* 3775. and the last part in the same language and metre in MS. Bib. *Reg.* 8 F. ix. How much may be wanting I have not had opportunity to examine. I have never seen *Bevis* in French; but Du Fresnoy, in his *Biblioth. des Romans*, t. ii. p. 241. mentions a MS. of *Le Roman de Beuves de Hantonne*, and another of *Le Roman de Beuves et Rosiane, en Rime*; and the Italians, who were certainly more likely to borrow from the French than from the English language, had got among them a Romance *di Buovo-d'Antona* before the year 1348. Quadrio, Storia della Poesia, t. vi. p. 542.

However, I think it extremely probable that these three Romances, though originally written in French, were composed in England, and perhaps by Englishmen; for we find that the general currency of the French language here engaged several of our own countrymen to use it in their compositions. Peter of Langtoft may be reckoned a dubious instance, as he is said by some to have been a Frenchman; but Robert Grosseteste, the famous Bishop of Lincoln in the time of Henry III, was a native of Suffolk, and yet he wrote his *Chasteau d'Amours*, and his *Manuel des Pechées* in French. [Tanner's Bib. Brit. and Hearne's Pref. to Rob. of Gloucester, p. lviii.]—There is a translation of *Cato* in French verse by *Helis de Guincestre*, i. e. Winchester, MS. *Harl.* 4388. and a Romance also in French verse, which I suppose to be the original of the English *Ipomedon* [Percy's Cat. n. 22.] by *Hue de Rotelande*, is to be found in MS. *Cotton.* Vesp. A. vii.—A French Dialogue in verse, MS. *Bod.* 3904. entitled, "*La pleinte par entre mis Sire Henry de Lacy Counte de Nichole et Sire Wauter de Bybelesworth pur la croiserie en la terre Seinte*," was most probably composed by the latter, who has also left us another work in French prose. [See his article in Tanner, Bibl. Brit.]—Even as late as the time of Chaucer, Gower wrote his *Speculum meditantis* in French, but whether in verse or prose is uncertain. John Stowe, who was a diligent searcher after MSS. had never seen this work [Annals, p. 326.]: nor does

popular Poems, which (from their having been originally written in the Roman, or French, language) were called Romances, flourished about this time. It is unnecessary to enter into particulars here concerning any of them, as they do not appear to have invented, or imported from abroad, any new modes of Versification, by which the Art coud be at all advanced[56], or even to have improved those which were before in use. On the contrary, as their works were intended for the ear more than for the eye, to be recited rather than read, they were apt to be more attentive to their Rimes than to the exactness of their Metres, from a presumption, I suppose, that the defect, or redundance, of a syllable might be easily covered in the recitation, especially if accompanied, as it often was, by some musical instrument.

§ VI. Such was, in general, the state of English Poetry at the time when Chaucer probably made his first essays. The use of Rime was established; not exclusively (for the Author of

either Bale or Pits set down the beginning of it, as they generally do of the books which they have had in their hands. However, one French Poem of Gower's has been preserved. In MS. *Harl.* 3869. it is connected with the *Confessio Amantis* by the following rubric: "Puisqu'il ad dit cidevant en Englois par voie d'essample la sotie de cellui qui par amours aime par especial, dirra ore apres en Francois a tout le monde en general une traitie selonc les auctours, pour essampler les amants marriez, au fin q'ils la foi de leurs seints espousailles pourront par fine loialte guarder, et al honeur de dieu salvement tenir." Pr. *Le creatour de toute creature.* It contains LV Stanzas of 7 verses each, in the last of which is the following apology for the language:

"Al' universite de tout le monde
Johan Gower ceste Balade envoie,
Et si jeo nai de Francois la faconde,
Pardonetz moi qe jeo de ceo forsvoie;
Jeo suis Englois, si quier par tiele voie
Estre excuse ———."

Chaucer himself seems to have had no great opinion of the performances of his countrymen in French. [Prol. to Test. of Love, ed. 1542.] "Certes (says he) there ben some that speke theyr poysy mater in Frenche, of whyche speche the Frenche men have as good a fantasye, as we have in hearing of French mennes Englyshe." And he afterwards concludes, with his usual good sense. "Let then Clerkes endyten in Latyn, for they have the propertye of science and the knowinge in that facultye; and lette Frenchmen in theyr Frenche also endyte theyr queynt termes, for it is kyndly to theyr mouthes; and let us shewe our fantasyes in suche wordes as we lerneden of our dames tonge."

[56] It was necessary to qualify the assertion, that the Rimers of this period "did not invent or import from abroad any new modes of Versification," as, in fact, Robert of Brunne (in the passage referred to in n. 54.) has mentioned three or four sorts of verse, different from any which we have hitherto met with, and which appear to have been much cultivated, if not introduced, by the writers who flourished a little before himself. He calls them *Couwee*, *Strangere*, *Enterlace*, and *Baston*. Mr. Bridges, in a sensible letter to Thomas Hearne [App. to Pref. to Peter Langt. p. ciii.] pointed out these terms as particularly "needing an explanation;" but Thomas chose rather to stuff his book with accounts *of the Nunnery at Little Gidding*, &c. which cost him only the labour of transcribing. There can be little doubt, I think, that the Rimes called *Couwée* and *Enterlacée* were derived from the *Versus Caudati* and *Interlaqueati* of the Latin Rimers of that age. Though Robert of Brunne in his Prologue professes not to attempt these elegancies of composition, yet he has intermixed several passages in Rime *Couwée*; [see p. 266. 273, 6, 7, 8, 9, et al.] and almost all the latter part of his work from the Conquest is written in Rime *Enterlacée*, each couplet riming in the middle as well as at the end. [This was the nature of the *Versus interlaqueati*, according to the following specimen, MS. *Harl.* 1002.

Plausus Grecorum | lux cecis et via claudis |
Incola celorum | virgo dignissima laudis.]

I cannot pretend to define the exact form of the Rime called *Baston*, but I dare say it received its appellation from the Carmelite, *Robert Baston*, a celebrated Latin Rimer in the reigns of Edward I. and II. [See Tanner, Bibl. Brit. in v. and Hearne's Pref. to Fordun, p. ccxxvi. et seq.] His verses upon the battle of Bannockburn, in 1313, are printed in the Appendix to Fordun, p. 1570. They afford instances of all the whimsical combinations of Rimes which can well be conceived to find a place in the Latin heroic metre.

As to Rime *Strangere*, I suspect (upon considering the whole passage in Robert of Brunne) that it was rather a general name, including all sorts of *uncommon* Rimes, than appropriated to any particular species.

Upon the whole, if this account of these new modes of Versification shall be allowed to be any thing like the truth, I hope I shall be thought justified in having added, "that the Art coud not be at all advanced by them."

the "Visions of Pierce Ploughman" wrote after the year 1350[57] without Rime,) but very generally; so that in this respect he had little to do but to imitate his predecessors. The Metrical part of our Poetry was capable of more improvement, by the polishing of the measures already in use as well as by the introducing of new modes of versification; and how far Chaucer actually contributed to the improvement of it, in both or either of these particulars, we are now to consider.

§ VII. With respect to the regular Metres then in use, they may be reduced, I think, to four. First, the long Iambic Metre[58], consisting of not more than fifteen, nor less than fourteen syllables, and broken by a *Cæsura* at the eighth syllable. Secondly, the Alexandrin Metre[59],

[57] This is plain from fol. 68. edit. 1550. where the year 1350 is named, as a year of great scarcity. Indeed, from the mention of the Kitten in the tale of the Rattons, fol. iii. iiii. I should suspect that the author wrote at the very end of the reign of Edward III, when Richard was become heir apparent.

The Visions *of* (i. e. *concerning*) Pierce Ploughman are generally ascribed to one *Robert Langland;* but the best MSS. that I have seen, make the Christian name of the author *William*, without mentioning his surname. So in MS. *Cotton*. Vesp. B. xvi. at the end of p. 1. is this rubric. "Hic incipit secundus passus de visione *Willelmi* de Petro Plouhman." And in ver 5. of p. 2. instead of, "*And sayde;* sonne, *slepest thou?*" the MS. has, "*And sayde;* Wille, *slepest thou?*" See also the account of MS. *Harl.* 2376. in the Harleian Catalogue.

I cannot help observing, that these Visions have been printed from so faulty and imperfect a MS. that the author, whoever he was, would find it difficult to recognize his own work. However, the judgement of the learned Doctors, Hickes and Percy, [Gram. A. S. p. 217.—Rel. of Anc. Poet. v. ii. p. 260.] with respect to the laws of his versification, is confirmed by the MSS. Each of his verses is in fact a distich, composed of two verses, after the Saxon form, without Rime, and not reducible to any certain Metre. I do not mean to say, that a few of his verses may not be picked out, consisting of fourteen and fifteen syllables, and resembling the metre used in the *Ormulum;* and there are still more of twelve and thirteen syllables, which might pass for very tolerable Alexandrines: but then, on the other hand, there is a great number of his verses (warranted for genuine by the best MSS.) which cannot, by any mode of pronunciation, be extended beyond nine or ten syllables; so that it is impossible to imagine, that his verse was intended to consist of any determinate number of syllables. It is as clear that his Accents, upon which the harmony of modern Rythms depends, are not disposed according to any regular system. The first division of a verse is often Trochaic, and the last Iambic; and *vice versâ*. The only rule, which he seems really to have prescribed to himself, is what has been taken notice of by his first Editor, viz. "to have three wordes at the leaste in every verse whiche beginne with some one letter." Crowley's Pref. to Edit. 1550.

[58] The most perfect example of this metre has been given above, n. 52, from the *Ormulum*. Each verse is composed of fifteen syllables, and broken by a *Cæsura* at the eighth, which always terminates a word. The accents are so disposed upon the even syllables, particularly the eighth and fourteenth, as to produce the true Iambic Cadence.

The learned reader will recollect, that the *Political verses*, as they are called, of Tzetzes, and others, who wrote when the Greek versification was become Rythmical instead of Metrical, are *chiefly* of this form. See Du Cange, v. Politici Versus. And it is remarkable, that, about the time of our Orm, Ciullo d'Alcamo, a Poet of Sicily, where the Greek was still a living language, [Montf. Palæog. Gr. l. vi.] made use of these verses of fifteen syllables, intermixed with Hendecasyllables, in the only production of his which has been preserved. Raccolta dell' Allacci, p. 408—16. The first Stanza is quoted by Crescimbeni, [Istor. d. V. P. l. i. p. 3.] who however labours very much to persuade us that the verses in question ought not to be considered as verses of fifteen syllables, but as containing each of them two verses, the one of eight and the other of seven syllables. If this were allowed, the nature of the verse would not be altered: [See before, p. xxxv.] but the supposition is highly improbable, as by that distribution there would be three verses in each Stanza not riming. In what follows, Crescimbeni shews very plainly that he had not adverted to the real nature of Ciullo's measure, for he compares it with the noted tetrameter, "Gallias Cæsar subegit, Nicomedes Cæsarem," which is a *Trochaic*, whereas these verses of Ciullo are evidently *Iambics*, like those of Orm.

I suspect, that, if we coud recover the genuine text of Robert of Gloucester, he would be found to have written in this Metre. It was used by Warner, in his *Albions England* (another Chronicle in verse) in the latter end of Q. Elizabeth's reign; and Gascoigne about the same time [*Instruction concerning the making of verse in Eng.* Signature U. ii.] speaks of the couplet, consisting of one verse of twelve and another of fourteen syllables, as *the commonest sort of verse* then in use. It may be proper to observe, that the metre, which Gascoigne calls a verse of fourteen syllables, is exactly the same with what is called above a verse of fifteen syllables; just as the French Alexandrin may be composed indifferently of twelve or thirteen syllables, and the Italian Hendecasyllable of ten, eleven, or even twelve. The general rule in all these kinds of verse is, that, when they consist of the greater number of syllables, the superfluous syllables, as they may be called, are never accented.

[59] Robert of Brunne, in his translation of *Peter of Langloft*, seems to have used the *Alexandrin* verse in imitation

consisting of not more than thirteen syllables, nor less than twelve, with a *Cæsura* at the sixth. Thirdly, the Octosyllable Metre; which was in reality the antient Dimeter Iambic. Fourthly, the Stanza of six verses; of which the first, second, fourth, and fifth, were in the complete Octosyllable Metre; and the third and last catalectic, *i. e.* wanting a syllable, or even two.

§ VIII. In the first of these Metres it does not appear that Chaucer ever composed at all, (for, I presume, no one can imagine that he was the author of Gamelyn,) or in the second; and in the fourth we have nothing of his but the Rime of Sire Thopas, which, being intended to ridicule the vulgar Romancers, seems to have been purposely written in their favourite Metre. In the third, or Octosyllable Metre[60], he has left several compositions; particularly,

of his Original; but his Metre (at least in Hearne's copy) is frequently defective, especially in the latter part of his work, where he affects to rime at the *Cæsura* as well as at the end of his verse.

The Alexandrin metre is generally agreed to have been first used in the *Roman d'Alexandre*, by Lambert li Cors and Alexandre de Bernay, toward the latter end of the twelfth Century. Du Verdier, Bibl. p. 780. Fauchet, l. ii. A late French Antiquary (M. L'Eveque de la Ravaliere,) in his history *Des Revolutions de la Langue Françoise*, p. 165. has combated this opinion, upon the authority of some Alexandrin verses, which he has discovered, as he supposes, in the *Roman de Rou*. I shall only observe, that no such verses are to be found in a very good MS. of the *Roman de Rou*, Bib. *Reg.* 4 C. xi. and I very much suspect that upon an accurate examination they will appear to have been not the work of *Wace*, but of some later author. A similar mistake of an interpolation, or continuation, for the original work has led another very able Antiquary of the same nation to place the *Roman de Rou* in the fourteenth Century. Mem. de l'Acad. des I. et B. L. tom. xv. p. 582. There can be no doubt, that *Wace* wrote the *Roman de Rou* about the middle of the twelfth Century. See before, n. 47.

They who attend only to the length of the Alexandrin verse, will naturally derive it from the Trimeter Iambic rythms, which were in frequent use in the beginning of the twelfth Century. See Orderic. Vital. l. ii. p. 404. 409. 410. 415. et al. But when it is considered, that the *Cæsura* at the sixth syllable, so essential to the Alexandrin metre, was hardly ever observed in the Trimeter Iambic, it will seem more probable, I think, that the inventor of the Alexandrin took for his model, what has been called above, the long Iambic, but, for some reason or other, retrenched a foot, or two syllables, in the first hemistich.

[60] Though I call this the Octosyllable Metre from what I apprehend to have been its original form, it often consists of nine and sometimes of ten syllables; but the eighth is always the last accented syllable.

The oldest French poems, to the latter end of the twelfth Century, are all in this metre; but upon the invention of the Alexandrin, the octosyllable verse seems by degrees to have been confined to the several species of lighter compositions in which it is still used. Here in England, Robert of Brunne, in his Preface to his translation of *Le Brut* [App. to Pref. to Peter Langtoft, p. c.] calls it "*light rime*," in contradistinction to "strange rime," of which he has just enumerated several sorts [see n. 56.]; and says, that he wrote in it "for luf of the lewed man:" and Chaucer himself speaks of it in nearly the same terms in the beginning of the third book of the *House of Fame*.

> "God of science and of light,
> Apollo, thurgh thy grete might
> This little last book now thou gye;
> Not that I will for maystrye
> Here art potential be shewde;
> But, for the ryme is *light and lewde*,
> Yet make it somewhat agreable,
> Though some verse fayle in a syllable."

The learned Editor of a part of the Canterbury Tales [London, 1737, 8vo.] has quoted this passage [Pref. p. xxv.] as proving, "by Chaucer's own confession, that he did not write in equal measure."

It certainly proves, that he did not write in equal measure *in this particular poem* of the House of Fame; but it proves also, that he knew well what the laws of measure were, and that he thought that any deviation from them required an apology. Is it just to conclude, because Chaucer has owned a neglect of those laws in one work, written in light metre, and in which he formally disclaims any exertion of art [ver. 4, 5.] that therefore he has been equally negligent of them in his other works, written in the gravest metre, and in which he may reasonably be supposed to have employed his utmost skill of versification? In the Troilus, for instance, [b. v.] he has a solemn prayer, "that none miswrite, or *mismetre* his book." Can we suppose that it was not originally written in Metre?—But I shall not enter any further into the general argument concerning Chaucer's versification, which will more properly be discussed in the text. My business here was only to prevent the reader from coming to the question with a preconceived opinion (upon the authority of the learned Editor above-mentioned) that "Chaucer himself," in this passage of the House of Fame, "has put the matter out of dispute."

To return again to the Octosyllable Metre. Its constitution is such, that the first syllable may often be dropped without

›erfect Translation of the *Roman de la Rose,*" which was, probably, one of his earliest ances; "the House of Fame;" "the Dethe of the Duchesse Blanche," and a poem is "Dreme:" upon all which it will be sufficient here to observe in general, that, if he en no other proofs of his poetical faculty, these alone must have secured to him the ience, above all his predecessors and contemporaries, in point of Versification.

But by far the most considerable part of Chaucer's works is written in that kind of hich we now call the Heroic[61], either in Distichs or in Stanzas; and as I have not le to discover any instance of this metre being used by any English poet before him, I h inclined to suppose that he was the first introducer of it into our language. It had en practised in France, in the Northern as well as the Southern provinces; and in ithin the last fifty years before Chaucer wrote, it had been cultivated with the greatest r and success, in preference to every other metre, by Dante, Petrarch, and Boccace. e reflect that two of Chaucer's juvenile productions, the Palamon and Arcite, and the were in a manner translated from the *Theseida* and the *Filostrato* of Boccace[62], both

---

udies to the harmony of the verse; and as far as I have observed, that is the syllable in which Chaucer's his kind generally fail. We have an instance in the first line of the passage quoted above—

God of science and of light—

well (to my ear at least) as

Thou God of science and of light—

to Mr. Urry's correction. The reason, I apprehend, is, that the measure, though of another sort, is still nstead of a Dimeter Iambic, it is a Dimeter Trochaic Catalectic.

uch liberty can be taken in the Heroic Metre without totally destroying its harmony; and therefore when mentioned learned Editor says [Pref. p. xxvi.] that the numbers of Chaucer "are always musical, whether or exceed their complement," I doubt his partiality for his author has carried him too far. I have no myself that an heroic verse, which wants a syllable of its complement, can be musical, or even tolerable. hich he has quoted from the Knightes Tale [ver. 1228 of this Edition],

Not in purgatory but in helle—

n manage it; (whether you make a pause; or give two times to the first syllable, as he rather advises;)— pass for a verse of any form. Nor did Chaucer intend that it should. He wrote (according to the —

Not *only* in purgatory but in helle.

leroic Metre with us, as with the Italians, is of the Iambic form, consists of ten, eleven, or twelve syllables; however, being in all cases the last accented syllable. The French have the same Metre; but with them ce contain more than eleven syllables, as their language has few (if any) words, in which the accent is laid ntepenultima. Though we have a great number of such words, we seldom use the verse of twelve syllables. rdinary difficulty of riming with three syllables is a sufficient reason for excluding it from all works which a in Rime, and in Blank Metre the two unaccented syllables at the end make the close of the verse languid. Milton, for the sake of variety of measure, has inserted a very few of these verses, which the ll *Sdruccioli*, in his heroic poems; but they are more commonly and, I think, more properly employed in compositions, where a continued stateliness of numbers is less requisite.

rical name for this Metre in Italy is *Endecasyllabo;* and the verses of ten and twelve syllables are distin- additions; the former being called *Endecasyllabo tronco*, and the latter *Endecasyllabo sdrucciolo*. This think, that the verse of eleven syllables was the primitive metre, and principally used, as it still is, in it will appear hereafter, if I am not mistaken, that the greatest part of Chaucer's heroic verses, when ritten and pronounced, are in this measure.

o little a while since the world has been informed, that the Palamon and Arcite of Chaucer was taken *heseida* of Boccace, that it would not have been surprising if another century had elapsed without our at our countryman had also borrowed his Troilus from the *Filostrato* of the same author; as the *Filostrato* rce, and much less famous, even in Italy, than the *Theseida*. The first suspicion which I entertained of was from reading the title of the *Filostrato* at large, in *Saxii* Hist. Lit. Typog. Mediolan. *ad an.* 1498, wards found, in Montfaucon's Bibl. MSS. t. ii. P. 793. among the King of France's MSS. one with this title: *ato, dell' amorose fatiche di Troilo per Gio Boccaccio.*" See also Quadrio, t. vi. p. 473. I had just employed procure me some account of this MS. from Paris, when I had the good fortune to meet with a printed copy

written in the common Italian hendecasyllable verse, it cannot but appear extremely probable that his metre also was copied from the same original; and yet I cannot find that the form of his Stanza in the Troilus, consisting of seven verses, was ever used by Boccace, though it is to be met with among the poems of the King of Navarre, and of the *Provençal* Rimers[63] Whichever he shall be supposed to have followed, whether the French or Italians, it is certain that he coud not want in either language a number of models of correct and harmonious versification; and the only question will be, whether he had ability and industry enough to imitate that part of their excellency.

§ x. In discussing this question we should always have in mind, that the correctness and harmony of an English verse depends entirely upon its being composed of a certain number of syllables, and its having the accents of those syllables properly placed. In order therefore to form any judgement of the Versification of Chaucer, it is necessary that we should know the syllabical value, if I may use the expression, of his words, and the accentual value of his syllables, as they were commonly pronounced[64] in his time; for without that knowledge, it is not more probable that we should determine justly upon the exactness of his metres, than that we should be able to cast up rightly an account stated in coins of a former age, of whose current rates and denominations we are totally ignorant.

§ xi. Let us consider a moment, how a sensible critic in the Augustan age would have proceeded, if called upon to examine a work of Ennius[65]. When he found that a great pro-

---

in the very curious Collection of the Reverend Mr. Crofts. The title is "Il Fylostrato, che tracta de lo innamoramento de Troylo e Gryscida: et de molte altre infinite battaglie. Impresso nella inclita cita de Milano per magistro Uldericho Scinzenzeler nell'anno M. CCCC LXXXXVIII. a di XXVII. di mese de Septembre, in 4°." By the favour of the learned owner (who is as free in the communication, as he has been zealous in the collection, of his literary treasures) I had soon an opportunity of satisfying myself, that Chaucer was to the full as much obliged to Boccace in his Troilus as in his Knightes Tale.

The doubts which Quadrio mentions [t. vi. p. 474.], whether the *Filostrato* was really a work of Boccace, are sufficiently answered, as he observes, by the concurring testimony of several antient MSS. which expressly name him as the author. And it may be remarked, that Boccace himself, in his Decameron, has made the same honourable mention of this Poem as of the *Thescida*; though without acknowledging either for his own. In the introduction to the Sixth Day, he says, that "Dioneo insieme con Lauretta *di Troilo et di Chriseida* cominciarono cantare," just as afterwards, in the conclusion of the Seventh Day, we are told, that the same "Dioneo et la Fiammetta gran pezza cantarono insieme *d'Arcita et di Palemone.*"

[63] See *Poesies du Roi de Navarre*, Chans. XVI. XVIII. XXVII. XXXIII. LVIII. The only difference is, that the two last verses, which in Chaucer's Stanza form a distinct couplet, are made by Thibaut to rime with the first and third. In a MS. of Provençal poetry (in the Collection of the Reverend Mr. Crofts), I find one piece by Folket de Marseilles, who died about 1213, in which the Stanza is formed exactly agreeable to Chaucer's.

This Stanza of seven verses, being first introduced, I apprehend, by Chaucer, was long the favourite measure of the Poets who succeeded him. In the time of Gascoigne it had acquired the name of *Rithme royall; and surely*, says he, *it is a royall kinde of verse serving best for grave discourses.* [Instruction concerning the making of verse. Sign. U. 1. b.] Milton, in some of his juvenile compositions, has made the last verse of this Stanza an Alexandrin.

As the *Thescida* and the *Filostrato* of Boccace are both written in the Octave Stanza, of which he is often, though improperly, called the inventor [see Pasquier, *Recherches*, l. vii. c. 3.] it seems extraordinary that Chaucer should never have adopted that Stanza. Even when he uses a Stanza of eight verses (as in the Monkes Tale), it is constituted very differently from the Italian Octave. I observe, by the way, that Chaucer's Stanza of eight verses, with the addition of an Alexandrin, is the Stanza in which Spenser has composed his *Faery Queen.*

[64] Mons. l'Eveque de la Ravaliere, in his Discourse *de l'ancienneté des Chansons Françoises*, prefixed to the *Poesies du Roi de Navarre*, has the same observation with respect to the old French poets. *Leur Poesie* (says he, p. 27.) *marque combien ils respectoient cette régle* [of exact riming]; *mais pour en juger aujourd'hui*, ainsi que de la mesure de leurs Vers, *il faut prononcer les mots comme eux*:—He is vindicating the antient French bards from an unjust and ignorant censure of Boileau, in his *Art Poet.* Chant. i. So that, it should seem, a great Poet is not of course a judicious Antiquary. See above, n. 4. a censure of Chaucer's verse by our Dryden, who was certainly a *great Poet.*

[65] Though Ennius died not an hundred and fifty years before what may be called the age of Augustus, his language and versification are so different from those of Ovid, for instance, that I much question whether his poems were better relished, or even understood, by the vulgar Romans in that age, than the works of Chaucer are now by the

: verses were strictly conformable to the ordinary rules of Metre, he would, scruple to conclude that such a conformity must have been produced by art and ıt by mere chance. On the other hand, when he found, that in some verses the ıt, to appearance, was either deficient or redundant; that in others the feet were ıposed of too few or too many syllables, of short syllables in the place of long, or place of short; he would not, I think, immediately condemn the old Bard, as once forgotten the fundamental principles of his art, or as having wilfully or ɔviated from them. He would first, I presume, enquire, whether all these were in the genuine text of his author, or only the mistakes of Copyists: he ɔ further, by comparing the genuine text with other contemporary writings and whether many things, which appeared irregular, were not in truth sufficiently justified by the constant practice, or excused by the allowed licence of the age: ty failed, he would have recourse, but soberly, to etymology and analogy; and ew passages remained, not reducible to the strict laws of Metre by any of the e-mentioned, if he were really (as I have supposed him) a sensible critic, he rather to expect patiently the solution of his difficulties from more correct ır a more complete theory of his author's versification, than to cut the knot, by nptorily, that the work was composed without any regard to metrical rules.

: leave to pursue the same course with respect to Chaucer. The great number ıding complete even to our ears, which is to be found in all the least corrected orks, authorises us to conclude, that he was not ignorant of the laws of metre. clusion it is impossible not to ground a strong presumption, that he intended to ame laws in the many other verses which seem to us irregular; and if this was ntion, what reason can be assigned sufficient to account for his having failed so peatedly, as is generally supposed, in an operation, which every Balladmonger an, woman, or child, is known to perform with the most unerring exactness, and xtraordinary fatigue?

offences against metre in an English verse, as has partly been observed before, ther from a superfluity or deficiency of syllables, or from the accents being ıced.

ı respect to the first species of irregularity, I have not taken notice of any n Chaucer's verses, but what may be reduced to just measure by the usual even modern Poets. And this, by the way, is a strong proof of his real attenıl rules; for otherwise, if he had written without any restraint of that kind, a

---

era. However a great many of his verses are as smoothly turned as those of Ovid himself, and it is Virgil has not scrupled to incorporate several of them into his divine Æneid. At the same time, eye over the Fragments of his Annals, as collected by Columna, Hesselius, and others, will find s of all the seeming irregularities alluded to in the text.

sary to trouble the Reader with an enumeration of Syncope, Apostrophus, Synecphonesis, &c.

Quicquid habent telorum armamentaria vatum.

think, be comprehended in our language under this one general principle, that an English verse, mposed of feet of two syllables, is capable of receiving feet of three syllables in every part of it, pro- the three syllables be accented.

er can taste the metrical harmony of the following lines of Milton, will not be embarrassed how to emingly) superfluous syllables, which he may meet with in Chaucer.

P. L. ii. 123. Ōminous | conjecture on the whole success.
302. A pil | lar of státe | ; deep on his front engraven—
658. Celestial spir | its in bón | dage, nor the abyss—
v. 495. No inconvenient dl | et, nor tóo | light fare.
vii. 122. Things not revealed, which the invis | ible King—

certain proportion of his deviations from measure must, in all probability, have been on the side of excess.

§ xv. But a great number of Chaucer's verses labour under an apparent deficiency of a syllable, or two. In some of these perhaps the defect may still be supplied from MSS. but for the greatest part I am persuaded no such assistance is to be expected[67]; and therefore, supposing the text in these cases to be correct, it is worth considering whether the verse also may not be made correct, by adopting in certain words a pronunciation, different indeed from modern practice, but which, we have reason to believe, was used by the author himself.

For instance, in the Genitive case Singular and the Plural Number of Nouns (which, as has been remarked above, in the time of Chaucer had the same expression), there can be no doubt that such words as, *shoures*, ver. 1. *croppes*, ver. 7. *shires*, ver. 15. *lordes*, ver. 47, &c. were regularly pronounced as consisting of two syllables. Whenever they are used as monosyllables, it must be considered as a Poetical Licence, warranted however even then (as we may presume from the natural progress of our language) by the practice of inaccurate speakers in common conversation.

In like manner, we may be sure that *ed*, the regular termination of the Past Tense and its Participle, made, or contributed to make, a second syllable in the words, *perced*, ver. 2. *bathed*, ver. 3. *loved*, ver. 45. *wered*, ver. 75, &c.[68] The first step toward reducing words of this form to Monosyllables seems to have been to shorten the last syllable, either by transposing the final letters, as in—*wolde*, ver. 144. *saide*, ver. 763. &c. or by throwing away the *d*, as in—*coste*, ver. 1910. *caste*, ver. 2083, &c. In both these cases the words still remained of two syllables, the final *e* being sounded as an *e* feminine; but they were prepared to lose their last syllable by the easy licence of changing an *e* feminine into an *e* mute, or of dropping it entirely, according to the modern practice.

§ xvi. But nothing will be found of such extensive use for supplying the deficiencies of Chaucer's metre as the pronunciation of the *e* feminine; and as that pronunciation has been for a long time totally antiquated, it may be proper here to suggest some reasons for believing (independently of any arguments to be drawn from the practice of Chaucer himself) that the final *e* in our antient language was very generally pronounced, as the *e* feminine is at this day by the French.

With respect to words imported directly from France, it is certainly quite natural to suppose,

[67] I would not be thought to undervalue the MSS. which I have not seen, or to discourage those who may have inclination and opportunity to consult them. I only mean to say, that, where the text is supported (as it generally is in this Edition) by the concurrence of two or three good MSS. and the sense is clear and complete, we may safely consider it as tolerably correct. In the course of the Notes, I shall have occasion to point out several passages, in which either the disagreement of the good MSS. or the obscurity of their readings, makes a further enquiry absolutely necessary in order to settle the text.

[68] It appears from the Preface to the last Edition of Chaucer's Works, Lond. 1721, that Mr. Urry, the undertaker of that Edition, had the same opinion with respect to the pronunciation of the final syllables in this and the last-mentioned instance; and that it was his intention to distinguish those syllables, *whenever they were to be pronounced*, by printing them with an *i*, instead of an *e*; as, *shouris*, *shiris*, *percid*, *lovid*, &c. As such a distinction is entirely unsupported by the MSS. and must necessarily very much disfigure the orthography of the language, I cannot think that an Editor has a right to introduce it upon ever so plausible a pretence. A shorter and (in my opinion) a less exceptionable method would have been to have distinguished the syllables of this sort, *whenever they were to be contracted*, by adding a sign of Syncope, thus; *shoure's*, *shire's*, *perce'd*, *love'd*. But after all a reader, who cannot perform such operations for himself, had better not trouble his head about the Versification of Chaucer.

Mr. Urry had also discovered, that the final *e* (of which I shall treat more at large in the next Section) often made a syllable in Chaucer's verse; and (according to the Preface quoted above) he "always marked with an accent, when he judged it necessary to pronounce it; as, swetè, halvè, smalè, ver. 5, 8, 9." I have the same objection to this mark that I have to innovations in orthography; and besides, that it would be apt to mislead the ignorant reader (for whom only it can be intended), by making him suppose that the *e* so marked was really to be accented, whereas the true *e* feminine is always to be pronounced with an obscure evanescent sound, and is incapable of bearing any stress or accent.

that, for some time, they retained their native pronunciation; whether they were Nouns substantive, as, *hoste*, ver. 753. *face*, ver. 1580, &c.—or Adjectives, as, *large*, ver. 755. *strange*, ver. 13, &c.—or Verbs, as, *grante*, ver. 12756. *preche*, ver. 12327, &c. and it cannot be doubted, that in these and other similar words in the French language, the final *e* was always pronounced, as it still is, so as to make them dissyllables.

We have not indeed so clear a proof of the original pronunciation of the Saxon part[69] of our language; but we know, from general observation, that all changes of pronunciation are usually made by small degrees; and therefore, when we find that a great number of those words, which in Chaucer's time ended in *e*, originally ended in *a*, we may reasonably presume, that our ancestors first passed from the broader sound of *a* to the thinner sound of *e* feminine, and not at once from *a* to *e* mute. Besides, if the final *e* in such words was not pronounced, why was it added? From the time that it has confessedly ceased to be pronounced it has been gradually omitted in them, except where it may be supposed of use to lengthen or soften[70] the preceding syllable, as in—*hope, name*, &c. But according to the antient orthography it terminates many words of Saxon original, where it cannot have been added for any such purpose, as, *herte, childe, olde, wilde*, &c. In these therefore we must suppose that it was pronounced as an *e* feminine, and made part of a second syllable; and so, by a parity of reason, in all others, in which, as in these, it appears to have been substituted for the Saxon *a*.

Upon the same grounds we may presume, that in words terminated, according to the Saxon form, in *en*, such as the Infinitive modes and Plural numbers of Verbs, and a great variety of Adverbs and Prepositions, the *n* only was at first thrown away, and the *e*, which then became final, continued for a long time to be pronounced as well as written.

These considerations seem sufficient to make us believe, that the pronunciation of the *e* feminine is founded on the very nature of both the French and Saxon parts of our language; and therefore, though we may not be able to trace the reasons of that pronunciation in all cases so plainly as in those which have been just mentioned, we may safely, I think, conclude with the learned Wallis[71], that what is generally considered as an *e* mute in our language,

---

[69] This is owing to the Saxons not having left us any metrical compositions, as has been observed before, p. xxix. Hickes complains [Gr. A. S. c. xxiii. §. 7.], "that it is difficult to know of how many syllables a Saxon verse sometimes consists, for this reason among others, *quod non constat quomodo voces in* e *fœminino vel obscuro terminatæ pronuntiandæ sunt in carmine.*" He might, perhaps with more propriety, have complained, that it is difficult to know how words ending in *e* feminine are to be pronounced in a Saxon verse, because it is uncertain of how many syllables any of their verses consisted. I have mentioned in the text two cases of words abbreviated, in which I think we might conclude from general reasoning that the final *e* was pronounced. As this Theory, with respect to these words, is entirely confirmed by the practice of Orm (the most authentic metrical composer that we have in our antient language) it would not perhaps be unreasonable to infer, that the practice of Orm, in other words of Saxon original, in which the final *e* is pronounced, is consonant to the old Saxon usage. However that may be, the practice of Orm must certainly be admitted to prove, that such a pronunciation prevailed at least 150 years before Chaucer.

[70] In most of the words in which the final *e* has been omitted, its use in lengthening or softening the preceding syllable has been supplied by an alteration in the Orthography of that Syllable. Thus, in—*grete, mete, stele, rede, dere*,—in which the first *e* was originally long, as closing a syllable, it has (since they have been pronounced as Monosyllables) been changed either into *ea*, as in—*great, meat, steal, read, dear*; or into *ee*, as in—*greet, meet, steel, reed, deer*. In like manner the *o* in—*bote, fole, dore, gode, mone*, has been changed either into *oa*, as in—*boat, foal*; or into *oo*, as in—*door, good, moon*.

[71] Gram. Ling. Ang. c. i. §. 2. "Originem vero hujus *e* muti, nequis miretur unde devenerit, hanc esse judico: Nempe, quod antiquitus pronunciatum fuerit, sed obscuro sono, sicut Gallorum *e* fœmininum." He afterwards adds: "Certissimum autem hujus rei indicium est ex antiquis Poetis petendum; apud quos reperitur illud *e* promiscuè vel constituere vel non constituere novam Syllabam, prout ratio carminis postulaverit." So that, according to this judicious writer, (who has confessedly searched much deeper into the formation of vocal sounds in general, and the pronunciation of the English language in particular, than any of our other Grammarians,) I might have assumed, as certain, the point, which I have been labouring in the text (by arguments drawn from reason and analogy) to render probable.

either at the end or in the middle of words[72], was antiently pronounced, but obscurely, like the *e* feminine of the French.

§ XVII. The third kind of irregularity, to which an English verse is liable, is from the accents being misplaced. The restoring of Chaucer's words to their just number of syllables, by the methods which have been pointed out above, will often be of signal service in restoring his accents also to their proper places; but further, in many words, we must be cautious of concluding too hastily that Chaucer accented the same syllables that we do. On the contrary, I am persuaded that in his French words he most commonly laid his accent according to the French custom (upon the *last* syllable, or the *last but one* in words ending in *e* feminine), which, as is well known, is the very reverse of our practice. Thus in ver. 3. he uses *licoúr* for *líquour*; ver. 11. *coráges* for *coúrages*; ver. 22. again, *coráge* for *coúrage*; ver. 37. *resón* for *réason*; ver. 77. *viáge* for *vóyage*; ver. 109, 10. *viság*—*uságe* for *visage*—*úsage*; ver. 140. *manére* for *mánner*; ver. 186. *laboúre* for *lábour*; ver. 204. *prelát* for *prélate*; ver. 211. *langáge* for *lánguage*; ver. 212 *mariáge* for *márriage*; ver. 216. *contrée* for *coúntry*; and so through the whole work.

In the same manner he accents the last Syllable of the Participle Present, as, ver. 885, 6. *wedding*—*coming* for *wédding*—*cóming*; ver. 903. *living* for *líving*; ver. 907, 8. *coming*—*crying* for *cóming*—*crýing*; ver. 998. *brenning* for *brénning*, &c. and as he does this in words of Saxon as well as of French growth, I should suppose that the old Participle of the present tense, ending in *and*, was originally accented upon that syllable, as it certainly continued to be by the Scottish Poets a long time after Chaucer. See Bp. Douglas, Virg. p. 18. ver. 18. Spryngánd; ver 51. Beránd; p. 27. ver. 49. Fleánd; p. 29. ver. 10. Seánd.

These instances are all taken from the Riming syllables (where a strong accent is indispensably necessary) in order to prove beyond contradiction, that Chaucer frequently accented his words in the French manner. But if he followed this practice at the end of his verses, it is more than probable that he did the same in the middle, whenever it gave a more harmonious flow to his metre; and therefore in ver. 4. instead of *vértue*, I suppose he pronounced *vertúe*; in ver. 11. instead of *náture*, *natúre*; in ver. 25. instead of *avénture*, *aventúre*; in ver. 46. instead of *hónour*, *honoúr*, &c.

There is much more to this purpose in Wallis, *loc. cit.* which I should transcribe, if I did not suppose that his book is in the hands of every one, who is likely to be curious upon this subject. I will only take notice of one passage which may be wrested to his disadvantage. From considering the gradual extinction of the *e* feminine in our language, and observing that the French, with whom he conversed, very often suppressed it in their common speech, he has been led to predict, that the pronunciation of it would *perhaps shortly* be disused among them as among ourselves. The prediction has certainly failed; but, notwithstanding, I will venture to say, that, at the time when it was made, it was not unworthy of Wallises sagacity. Unluckily for its success, a number of eminent writers happened, at that very time, to be growing up in France, whose works, having since been received as standards of style, must probably fix for many centuries the antient usage of the *e* feminine in Poetry, and of course give a considerable check to the natural progress of the language. If the age of Edward III had been as favourable to Letters as that of Louis XIV; if Chaucer and his contemporary Poets had acquired the same authority here, that Corneille, Molière, Racine, and Boileau, have obtained in France; if their works had been published by themselves, and perpetuated in a genuine state by printing; I think it probable, that the *e* feminine would still have preserved its place in our Poetical language at least, and certainly without any prejudice to the smoothness of our versification.

[72] The reasoning in the text concerning the final *e* is equally applicable to the same vowel in the middle of words. Indeed (as Wallis has observed, *loc. cit.*) "vix uspiam in medio dictionis reperitur *e* mutum, quod non ab origine fuerit finale." If therefore it was pronounced while final, it would probably continue to be pronounced notwithstanding the addition of a syllable. If it was pronounced in *swete*, *trewe*, *large*, *riche*, it would be pronounced in *swetely*, *trewely*, *largely*, *richely*. [See ver. 123 and 3219, ver. 775 and 3692, ver. 2740 and 3034, ver. 1014 and 1913.] In another very numerous set of words (French Verbals ending in *ment*) the pronunciation of this middle *e* is countenanced, not only by analogy, but also by the still subsisting practice in the French language. So Chaucer certainly pronounced the words, *jugement*, ver. 780. 807. 820. *commandement*, ver. 2871. 2981. *amendement*, ver. 4183. *pavement*, *avisement*, ver. 4505, 6. Even Spenser in the same Canto (the 8th of B. v.) uses *attonement* and *avengement*, as words of four syllables: [St. 21. 8.—30. 5.] and Wallis takes notice that the middle *e* in *commandement* was pronounced in his time.

It may be proper however to observe, that we are not to expect from Chaucer that regularity in the disposition of his accents, which the practice of our greatest Poets in the last and the present century has taught us to consider as essential to harmonious[73] versification. None of his masters, either French or Italian, had set him a pattern of exactness[74] in this respect; and it is rather surprising, that, without rule or example to guide him, he has so seldom failed to place his accents in such a manner, as to produce the cadence best suited to the nature of his verse.

§ XVIII. I shall conclude this long and (I fear) tedious Essay, with a Grammatical and Metrical Analysis of the first eighteen lines of the Canterbury Tales. This will afford me an opportunity of illustrating at once a considerable part of that Theory, which I have ventured to propose in the preceding pages, with regard to the Language and Versification of Chaucer. The remainder I shall take occasion to explain in a few notes upon particular passages.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CANTERBURY TALES.

I. [1] *Whánne* that Ápril with his [2] *shoúres* [3] *sóte*
II. The droúghte of Márch hath [1] *pérced tó* the [2] *róte*,
III. And [1] *báthed* évery véine in [2] *swíche* [3] *licoúr*,
IV. Of whíche [1] *vertúe* engéndred ís the floúr;
V. Whan Zéphirús eke with his [1] *sóte* bréthe

---

[73] It is agreed, I believe, that, in our Heroic Metre, those Verses, considered singly, are the most harmonious, in which the Accents fall upon the even Syllables; but it has never, that I know, been defined, how far a verse may vary from this its most perfect form, and yet remain a verse. On the *tenth* (or riming) syllable a strong Accent is in all cases indispensably required; and in order to make the line tolerably harmonious, it seems necessary that at least *two more* of the *even* syllables should be accented, the *fourth* being (almost always) one of them. Milton however has not subjected his verse even to these rules; and particularly, either by negligence or design, he has frequently put an unaccented syllable in the *fourth* place. See P. L. b. iii. 36. 586. b. v. 413. 750. 874.

[74] It has been suggested above, that Chaucer probably copied his Heroic Metre from Boccace. But neither Boccace nor any of the older Italian Poets are exact in the disposition of their accents. Though their Hendecasyllable Metre is allowed by the best Critics to be derived from the Trimeter Iambic Catalectic, the perfection of it has never been determined, like that of our Heroic Metre, to consist in the conformity of its Accents to the pure Iambic measure. Quadrio, L. ii. Dist. iii. c. iv. Part. i. Nor does the King of Navarre always dispose his Accents more agreeably to our present notions. It is probable, I think, that some fundamental differences in the three languages may have led each of the three nations to prefer a different form of constructing the same kind of verse.

I. 1. *Whanne*, Sax. Hpænne, is so seldom used as a *Dissyllable* by Chaucer, that for some time I had great doubts about the true reading of this line. I now believe that it is right, as here printed, and that the same word is to be pronounced as a *Dissyllable* in ver. 703.

But with these relikes *whanne* that he fond—

Thanne, a word of the same form, occurs more frequently as a *Dissyllable*. See ver. 12260. 12506. 12721. 13924. 15282.
2. *Shoures*, Dis. *Plural number*. See above, p. xlii.—3. *Sote*. See ver. v.

II. 1. *Perced*, Dis. *Participle of the Past Time*. See above, p. xlii.—2. *Rote*; root.

III. 1. *Bathed*, Dis. See II. 1.—2. *Swiche*, such; from *Swilke*, Sax.—3. *licoúr*, Fr. has the accent upon the *last* syllable, after the French mode.

IV. 1. *Vertúe*, Fr. may be accented in the same manner. There is another way of preserving the harmony of this verse, by making *whiche*, (from *whilke*, Sax.) a *Dissyllable*. See ver. 1015. 3921. 5488. 6537. *Vertue* may then be pronounced, as it is now, with the accent on the *first*; the second syllable being incorporated with the first of *engendred*.

V. 1. *Sote, swete, swete*; sweet, Dis. See ver. 3219. 3699. 3724. 3765. 3790.

VI. [1]*Enspired* háth in évery hólt and héthe
VII. The téndre [1] *cróppes*, and the [2] *yónge* sónne,
VIII. Háth in the Rám his [1] *hálfe* coúrs [2] *yrónne*,
IX. And [1] *smále* [2] *foúles* [3] *máken* mélodíe,
X. That [1] *slépen* [2] *álle* níght with ópen eye,
XI. So príketh [1] *hém* [2] *natúre* in [3] *hír* [4] *corágés*;
XII. Than [1] *lóngen* fólk to [2] *gón* on pílgrimáges,
XIII. And [1] *pálmer'es* fór to [2] *séken* [3] *stránge* stróndes,
XIV. To [1] *sérve* [2] *hálwes* [3] *coúthe* in sóndry lóndes;
XV. And spéciallý from évery [1] *shíres* énde
XVI. Of [1] *Englelónd* to Cánterbúry [2] *they wénde*,
XVII. The hóly blísful mártyr fór to séke,
XVIII. That [1] *hém* hath [2] *hólpen*, whán that théy were [3] *séke*.

VI. 1. *Enspired*, Tris. *Part. of Past Time.*

VII. 1. *Croppes*, Dis. *Pl. N.* as *shoures*. I. 2.—2. *Yonge*, Dis. See ver. 213. 666. 1013. 3933, 73. It is used as a *Dissyllable* in the *Ormulum*. Col. 230.

That wás god bísne fúl i wís till úre *yunge* génge.

Stronge and *Longe* are pronounced in the same manner. See ver. 2375. 2640, 6. 3069. 3438. 3682.

VIII. 1. *Halfe* or *Halve*, Dis. The original word is *Halfen*. So *Selve*, from *Selven*, is a *Dissyllable*, ver. 2863. 4535.
2. *Yronne*; Run. *Part. of the Past Time*, with the Saxon prepositive article ȝe, which in the MSS. of Chaucer is universally expressed by *y*, or *i*. In this Edition, for the sake of perspicuity, *y* only is used.

IX. 1. *Smale* Dis. See ver. 146. 2078. 6397. 10207.—2. *Foules*, Dis. as *Shoures*. I. 2.—3. *Maken*; make. *Plural Number of the Present Tense.* See above, p. xxvi.

X. 1. *Slepen*, as *Maken*. IX. 3.—2. *Alle*, Dis. See ver. 76. 348. 536. 1854. 2102.

XI. 1. *Hem*; Them. It is constantly used so by Chaucer. 2. *Nature* should perhaps be accented on the *last* syllable (or rather the *last but one*, supposing it a *Trisyllable*), after the French manner, though in the present case the verse will be sufficiently harmonious if it be accented on the *first*. That Chaucer did often accent it after the French manner appears from ver. 8778. 9842. 11657. 11945. 12229. In the same manner he accents *Figúre*, ver. 2037. 2045. *Mesúre*, ver. 8132. 8498. *Asúre*, *Statúre*, ver. 8130, 3. *Peintúre*, ver. 11967. *Aventúre*, ver. 1188. 1237. *Creatúre*, ver. 2397. 4883. and many other words of the same form, derived from the French language.—3. *Hir*; Their. The Possessive Pronoun of the third Person Plural is variously written, *Hir*, *Hire*, *Her*, and *Here*; not only in different MSS. but even in the same page of good MSS. There seems to be no reason for perpetuating varieties of this kind, which can only have taken their rise from the unsettled state of our Orthography before the invention of Printing, and which now contribute more than any real alteration of the language to obscure the sense of our old Authors. In this edition, therefore, *Hir* is constantly put to signify *Their*; and *Hire* to signify *Her*, whether it be the oblique case of the Personal Pronoun *She*, or the Possessive of the same Pronoun.—4. *Corages*, Fr. is to be accented on the *Penultima*. See before, p. xliv. and also ver. 1947. 2215. To the other instances quoted in p. xliv. add, *Avantáge*, ver. 2449. 4566. *Brocáge*, 3375. *Forágé*, ver. 3866. *Lindge*, ver. 4270. 5419. *Servágé*, ver. 1948. 4788. *Costáge*, ver. 5831. *Parágé*, ver. 5832.

XII. 1. *Longen* as *Maken*. IX. 3.—2. *Gon*, Infinitive Mode of *Go*, terminated in *n* according to the Saxon form. See above, p. xxvi.

XIII. 1. *Pálmer'es*, Dis. the *e* of the termination being cut out by Syncope, as it generally is in *Plural Nouns* of *three* Syllables, accented upon the *first*, and in the *Past Tenses* and their *Participles of Verbs*, of the same description, ending in *ed*. The reason seems to be, that, where the Accent is placed so early, we cannot pronounce the final syllables fully, without laying more stress upon them, than they can properly bear.—2. *Seken* as *Gon*. XII. 2.—3. *Strange*, Dis. Fr. See before, p. xliii.

XIV. 1. *Serve* Dis. from *Serven*, the *n* being thrown away before *h*. See above, p. xxvi. and xliii.—2. *Halwes*, Sax. ꝑalȝeꝑ. The Saxon ȝ is changed into *w*, *as in sorwe*, *morwe*, and some others; though it generally passes into *y*. The derivatives from this same word afford us instances of both forms; *Holyness*, *Holyday*, All-*Hallows*-day.—3. *Couthe*; known, *The Participle of the Past Time* from *Connen*, to know. See before, n. 35.

XV. 1. *Shires*, Dis. *Genitive Case Sing.* See before, p. xlii.

XVI. 1. *Englelond*, Trisyllable, from the Saxon Enȝlalanda.—The last foot consists of three syllables.

—to Cán | terbúr | y they wende.

See above, n. 66.

XVIII. 1. *Hem*; Them. See XI. 1.—2. *Holpen*, the *Participle of the Past Time* from the Irregular Verb *Help*. See

.—3. *Seke ;* Sick. As Chaucer usually writes this word *Sike*, we may suppose that in this instance he has Orthography in order to make the Rime more exact; a liberty, with which he sometimes indulges himself, :h more sparingly than his contemporary Poets. The Saxon writers afford authorities to justify either method as they use both Seoca and Sioca.

:herto considered these verses as consisting of *ten* syllables only; but it is impossible not to observe, that, ɔ the rules of pronunciation established above, all of them, except the 3d and 4th, consist really of *eleven* This is evident at first sight in ver. 11, 12, 13, 14, and might be shewn as clearly, by authority or analogy, in ; but as the *eleventh* syllable, in our versification, being unaccented, may always, I apprehend, be absent without prejudice to the metre, there does not seem to be any necessity for pointing it out in every instance.

AN

INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE

TO THE

CANTERBURY TALES.

CONTENTS.

§ I. The Dramatic form of Novel-writing invented by *Boccace*. The *Decameron* a species of Comedy. § II. The Canterbury Tales composed in imitation of the *Decameron*. Design of this Discourse to give, 1. the general Plan of them, and, 2. a Review of the parts contained in this Edition. § III. The GENERAL PLAN of the Canterbury Tales, as originally designed by Chaucer. § IV. Parts of this Plan not executed. § V. Review of the parts contained in this Edition.—THE PROLOGUE. The *Time* of the Pilgrimage. § VI. The *Number* of the Company. § VII. Their *Agreement* to tell Tales for their diversion upon their journey. § VIII. Their Characters. Their setting out. The Knight appointed by lot to tell the first Tale. § IX. THE KNIGHTES TALE copied from the *Theseida* of *Boccace*. A summary account of the *Theseida*. § X. The *Monk* called upon to tell a Tale; interrupted by the *Miller*. § XI. THE MILLER'S TALE. § XII. THE REVES TALE. The principal incidents taken from an old *French Fabliau*. § XIII. THE COKES TALE, imperfect in all the MSS. No foundation for ascribing the Story of *Gamelyn* to Chaucer. § XIV. THE PROLOGUE to the MAN OF LAWES Tale. The progress of the Pilgrims upon their journey. A reflection seemingly leveled at *Gower*. § XV. THE MAN OF LAWES TALE taken from *Gower*, who was not the inventor of it. A similar story in a Lay of *Bretagne*. § XVI. Reasons for placing the *Wife of Bathes Prologue* next to the *Man of Lawes Tale*. § XVII. THE WIFE OF BATHES PROLOGUE. § XVIII. THE WIFE OF BATHES TALE taken from the story of Florent in Gower, or from some older narrative. The fable much improved by Chaucer. § XIX. THE TALES OF THE FREERE AND THE SOMPNOUR. § XX. THE CLERKES TALE said by Chaucer to be borrowed from *Petrarch*, whose work upon this subject is a mere translation from *Boccace*. § XXI. Reasons for changing the order of the *three last* Stanzas of the Ballade at the end of the *Clerkes Tale*, and for placing the *Prologue to the Marchants Tale* immediately after them. § XXII. THE MARCHANTS TALE. The adventure of the *Pear-tree* in the Latin fables of *Adolphus*. The *Pluto* and *Proserpine* of Chaucer revived by Shakespeare under the names of *Oberon* and *Titania*. § XXIII. A new PROLOGUE TO THE SQUIERS TALE (now first printed) connecting it with the *Marchants Tale*. § XXIV. THE SQUIERS TALE, probably never finished by Chaucer. § XXV. THE FRANKELEINS PROLOGUE, attributed to the *Marchant* in the common editions. Reasons for restoring it to the *Frankelein*. § XXVI. THE FRANKELEINS TALE taken from a Lay of *Bretagne*. The same story twice told by *Boccace*. § XXVII. Reasons for removing the Tales of the *Nonne* and *Chanons Yeman* to the end of the *Nonnes Preestes Tale*. § XXVIII. Doubts concerning the Prologue to the *Doctours Tale*. § XXIX. THE DOCTOURS TALE. The story of Virginia from *Livy*. § XXX. THE PARDONERS PROLOGUE. The proper use of the Prologue in this work. The outline of THE PARDONERS TALE in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*. § XXXI. Reasons for transferring to the *Shipman* a *Prologue* which has usually been prefixed to the Tale of the *Squier*. THE SHIPMANS TALE probably borrowed from some *French Fableour*, older than *Boccace*. § XXXII. THE PRIORESSES PROLOGUE AND TALE. § XXXIII. Chaucer called upon for his Tale. His RIME OF SIRE THOPAS a ridicule upon the old metrical Romances. § XXXIV. His other Tale of MELIBEE in Prose, a translation from the *French*. § XXXV. THE MONKES TALE, upon the plan of *Boccace's* work *De Casibus virorum illustrium*. § XXXVI. THE TALE OF THE NONNES PREEST. The ground-work borrowed from a Fable of *Marie*, a *French* Poetess. § XXXVII. THE NONNES TALE not connected with any preceding Tale. Translated from the Life of St. *Cecilia* in the *Golden Legende*. Originally composed as a separate work. § XXXVIII. THE TALE OF THE CHANONS YEMAN, a satire against the Alchemists. § XXXIX. THE MANCIPLES PROLOGUE. The Pilgrims advanced to a place called "Bob up and down." THE MANCIPLES TALE, the fable of *Coronis* in *Ovid*. § XL. The Poem, called "*The Plowman's Tale*," why omitted in this edition. § XLI. THE PERSON'S PROLOGUE. The time of the day. THE PERSON'S TALE, a *Treatise on Penance*. § XLII. Remarks upon what is commonly called the RETRACTATION at the end of the *Person's Tale*. Conclusion.

§ I. THE Dramatic form, which Boccace gave to his collection of Tales, or Novels, about the middle of the fourteenth Century [1], must be allowed to have been a capital improvement

[1] The Action of the Decameron being supposed in 1348, the year of the great pestilence, it is probable that Boccace did not set about his work till after that period. How soon he completed it is uncertain. It should seem from the

of that species of amusing composition. The Decameron in that respect, not to mention many others, has the same advantage over the *Cento Novelle antiche*, which are supposed to have preceded it in point of time, that a regular Comedy will necessarily have over an equal number of single unconnected Scenes. Perhaps indeed there would be no great harm, if the Critics would permit us to consider the Decameron, and other compositions of that kind, in the light of Comedies not intended for the stage: at least we may venture to assume, that the closer any such composition shall copy the most essential forms of Comedy, the more natural and defined the Plan shall be; the more the Characters shall be diversified; the more the Tales shall be suited to the Characters; so much the more conspicuous will be the skill of the Writer, and his work approach the nearer to perfection.

§ II. The Canterbury Tales are a work of the same nature with the Decameron, and were, in all probability, composed in imitation of it, though upon a different and, in my opinion, an improved plan. It would be easy to shew, that, in the several points abovementioned, Chaucer has either been more judicious, or more fortunate, than his master Boccace: but, waiving for the present[2] that disquisition, I shall proceed to the immediate object of this Discourse, which is, in the first place, to lay before the Reader the general plan of the Canterbury Tales, as it appears to have been originally designed by Chaucer; and, secondly, to give a particular review of the several parts of that work, which are come down to us, as they are published in this edition.

§ III. THE GENERAL PLAN of the Canterbury Tales may be learned in a great measure from the Prologue, which Chaucer himself has prefixed to them. He supposes there, that a company of Pilgrims going to Canterbury assemble at an Inn in Southwark, and agree, that, for their common amusement on the road, each of them shall tell at least one Tale in going to Canterbury, and another in coming back from thence; and that he, who shall tell the best Tales, shall be treated by the rest with a supper upon their return to the same Inn. This is shortly the *Fable*. The *Characters* of the Pilgrims are as various as, at that time, coud be found in the several departments of *middle* life; that is, in fact, as various as coud, with any probability, be brought together, so as to form one company; the highest and the lowest ranks of society being necessarily excluded. It appears further, that the design of Chaucer was not barely to recite the Tales told by the Pilgrims, but also to describe their journey, *And all the*

Introduction to the Fourth Day, that a part (containing perhaps the three first Days) was published separately; for in that Introduction he takes pains to answer the censures, which had been passed upon him by several persons, who had read his Novels. One of the censures is, "that it did not become *his age* to write for the amusement of women, &c." In his answer he seems to allow the fact, that he was rather an old fellow, but endeavours to justify himself by the examples of "Guido Cavalcanti et Dante Alighieri *gia vecchi* et Messer Cino da Pistoia *vecchissimo*." It appears from a passage in the *Laberinto d'Amore* [Ed. 1723. t. iii. p. 24.], that Boccace considered himself as an elderly man, when he was a little turned of forty; and therefore the publication of the first part of the Decameron may very well have been, as Salviati has fixed it, [V. Manni. Ist. del Decam. p. 144.] in 1353, when Boccace was just forty years of age. If we consider the nature of the work, and that the Author, in his Conclusion, calls it repeatedly "*lunga fatica*," and says, that "*molto tempo*" had passed between the commencement and the completion of it, we can hardly, I think, suppose that it was finished in less than ten years; which will bring the publication of the entire collection of Novels, as we now have it, down to 1358.

[2] I will only just mention what appear to me to be fundamental defects in the Decameron. In the first place, the *Action* is indefinite; not limited by its own nature, but merely by the will of the Author. It might, if he had been so pleased, have as well comprehended twenty, or a hundred days, as ten; and therefore, though some frivolous reasons are assigned for the return of the Company to Florence, we see too plainly, that the true reason was, that the budget of Novels was exhausted. Not to mention, that every day after the first may properly be considered as containing a new Action, or, what is worse, a repetition of the Action of the former day. The second defect is in the *Characters*, which are so nearly resembling to each other, in age, rank, and even natural disposition, that, if they had been strictly supported, their conversation must have been incapable of that variety, which is necessary to carry the reader through so long a work. The third defect has arisen from the author's attempt to remedy the second. In order to diversify and enliven his narrations, he has made a circle of virtuous ladies and polite gentlemen hear and relate in their turns a number of stories, which cannot with any degree of probability be supposed to have been suffered in such an assembly.

remenant of their *pilgrimage* [ver. 726.]; including, probably, their adventures at Canterbury as well as upon the road. If we add, that the Tales, besides being nicely adapted to the Characters of their respective Relaters, were intended to be connected together by suitable introductions, and interspersed with diverting episodes; and that the greatest part of them was to have been executed in Verse; we shall have a tolerable idea of the extent and difficulty of the whole undertaking: and admiring, as we must, the vigour of that genius, which in an advanced age[3] coud begin so vast a work, we shall rather lament than be surprised that it has been left imperfect.

§ IV. In truth, if we compare those parts of the Canterbury Tales, of which we are in possession, with the sketch which has been just given of the intended whole, it will be found that more than one half is wanting. The Prologue we have, perhaps nearly complete, and the greatest part of the journey to Canterbury; but not a word of the transactions at Canterbury, or of the journey homeward, or of the Epilogue, which, we may suppose, was to have concluded the work, with an account of the Prize-supper and the separation of the company. Even in that part which we have of the journey to Canterbury, it will be necessary, in the following Review, to take notice of certain defects and inconsistencies, which can only be accounted for upon the supposition, that the work was never finished by the Author.

§ V. Having thus stated the general Plan of the Canterbury Tales, I shall now, according to my promise, enter upon a particular Review of those parts of them, which are published in this edition, beginning with THE PROLOGUE.

It seems to have been the intention of Chaucer, in the first lines of the Prologue, to mark with some exactness the *time* of his supposed pilgrimage; but unluckily the two circumstances of his description, which were most likely to answer that purpose, are each of them irreconcileable to the other. When he tells us, that "the shoures of April had *perced to the rote* the drought of March" [ver. 1, 2.], we must suppose, in order to allow due time for such an operation, that April was far advanced; while on the other hand the place of the Sun, "having just run half his course in the Ram" [ver. 7, 8.], restrains us to some day in the very latter end of March; as the Vernal Equinox, in the age of Chaucer, according to his own treatise on the Astrolabe[4], was computed to happen on the twelfth of March. This difficulty may, and I think, should, be removed by reading in ver. 8, *the Bull*, instead of *the Ram*[5]. All the

[3] Chaucer was born in 1328, and it is most probable, I think, that he did not begin his Canterbury Tales before 1382, at the earliest. My reason is this. The Queen, who is mentioned in the *Legende of Good Women*, ver. 496. was certainly Anne of Bohemia, the first Queen of Richard II. She was not married to Richard, till the beginning of 1382, so that the Legende cannot possibly be supposed of an earlier date than that year. In the Legende [ver. 329—332. ver. 417—430.] Chaucer has enumerated, I believe, all the considerable works which he had then composed. It was to his purpose not to omit any. He not only does not mention the Canterbury Tales, but he expressly names *the story of Palamon and Arcite* and *the Life of Saint Cecilia*, both which now make part of them, as separate compositions. I am persuaded therefore, that in 1382 the work of the Canterbury Tales was not begun; and if we look further and consider the troubles in which Chaucer was involved, for the five or six following years, by his connexions with John of Northampton, we can hardly suppose that it was much advanced before 1389, the sixty-first year of the author's age.

[4] In this particular the Editions agree with the MSS. but in general, the printed text of this Treatise is so monstrously incorrect, that it cannot be cited with any safety.

[5] This correction may seem to be authorised, in some measure, by Lidgate, who begins his continuation of the Canterbury Tales in this manner.

"Whan bright Phebus *passed was the Ram*
Midde of Aprill, and into the Bull came."

But the truth is, that Dan John wrote for the most part in a great hurry, and consequently without much accuracy. In the account which he proceeds to give of Chaucer's Tales, he not only confounds the circumstances of description of the Sompnour and Pardoner, but he speaks of the latter as—

Telling a tale to anger with the Frere.
Storie of Thebes, ver. 32—5.

the description will then be consistent with themselves, and with another passage 25.], where, in the best MSS. *the eighte and twenty day* of April is named as the day of ney to Canterbury.

ill suppose therefore, that the preceding day, the seven and twentieth of April, was on which the company assembled at the Tabard. In what year this happened, Chaucer thought fit to inform us[6]. Either he did not think it necessary to fix that point at perhaps he postponed it, till the completion of his work should enable him to assign late to his Fable, as should be consistent with all the historical circumstances, which t take occasion to introduce into it.

A second point, intended to be defined in the Prologue, is the *number of the company;* too has its difficulties. They are said in ver. 24. to have been *nine and twenty*, but it lear whether Chaucer himself is included in that number. They might therefore, g to that passage, be *thirty;* but if we reckon the several characters, as they are ted in the Prologue, we shall find them *one and thirty;* 1. a Knight; 2. a Squier; ian; 4. a Prioresse; 5. an other Nonne; 6. 7. 8. Three Preestes; 9. a Monk; 10. a 11. a Marchant; 12. a Clerk of Oxenforde; 13. a Sergeant of the Lawe; 14. a ein; 15. an Haberdasher; 16. a Carpenter; 17. a Webbe; 18. a Deyer; 19. a Tapiser; ke; 21. a Shipman; 22. a Doctour of Physike; 23. a Wif of Bathe; 24. a Persone; wman; 26. a Reve; 27. a Miller; 28. a Sompnour; 29. a Pardoner; 30. a Manciple; cer himself. It must be observed however that in this list there is one very suspicicle, which is that of the *three Preestes*. As it appears evidently to have been the

ear, that, whether the Pilgrimage were real or imaginary, Chaucer, as a Poet, had a right to suppose it to ened at the time which he thought best. He was only to take care, when the time was once fixed, that no ices were admitted into his Poem, which might clash, or be inconsistent with the date of it. When no date is assigned to a fable of this sort, we must naturally imagine that the date of the fable coincides with composition; and accordingly, if we examine the Canterbury Tales, we shall not find any circumstances ot perfectly suit with that period, which has been stated in a former note as the probable time of Chaucer's to compose them. The latest historical fact mentioned in them is the Insurrection of Jakke Straw [ver. ich happened in 1381; and the earliest, in which any person of the Drama is concerned, is the siege of er. 56, 7], which began in August 1342, and ended, with the taking of the city, in March 1344. Mariana, l. xi. The Knight therefore may very well be supposed to have been at that siege, and also upon a Pilgrimage ury in 1383, or thereabouts.

o are disposed to believe the Pilgrimage to have been real, and to have happened in 1383, may support on by the following inscription, which is still to be read upon the Inn, now called the Talbot, in Southwark. he Inn where Sir Jeffrey Chaucer and the twenty-nine Pilgrims lodged in their journey to Canterbury, ." Though the present inscription is evidently of a very recent date, we might suppose it to have been l to us by a succession of faithful transcripts from the very time; but unluckily there is too good reason ed, that the first inscription of this sort was not earlier than the last century. Mr. Speght, who appears to inquisitive concerning this Inn in 1597, has left us this account of it in his Glossary, v. TABARD. "A slevelesse coat, worne in times past by Noblemen in the warres, but now onely by Heraults, and is called te of Armes in servise. It is the signe of an Inne in Southwarke by London, within the which was the the Abbot of Hyde by Winchester. This was the Hostelry where *Chaucer* and the other Pilgrims mett to-l, with *Henry Baily* their hoste, accorded about the manner of their journey to Canterbury. And whereas me it hath bin much decaied, it is now by Master *J. Preston*, with the Abbot's house thereto adjoyned, ired, and with convenient roomes much encreased, for the receipt of many guests."

ascription of this kind had then been there, he would hardly have omitted to mention it; and therefore I ded it has been put up since his time, and most probably when the sign was changed from the Tabard to , in order to preserve the antient glory of the House notwithstanding its new title. Whoever furnished the be allowed to have at least invented plausibly.

am upon the subject of this famous Hostelry, I will just add, that it was probably parcel of two tenements ear to have been conveyed by William de Ludegarsale to the Abbot, &c. *de Hydd juxta Winton*, in 1306, and described, in a former conveyance there recited, to extend in length, "a communi fossato de Suthwerke entem, usque Regiam viam de Suthwerke versus Occidentem." Registrum de Hyde, MS. Harl. 1761. fol. If we should ever be so happy as to recover the account books of the Abbey of Hyde, we may possibly learn *Harry Bailly* paid for his inn, and many other important particulars.

design of Chaucer to compose his company of individuals of different ranks, in order to produce a greater variety of distinct characters, we can hardly conceive that he would, in this single instance, introduce *three*, of the same profession, without any discriminating circumstances whatever; and in fact, when the Nonnes Preest is called upon to tell his tale, [ver 14814.] he is accosted by the Host in a manner, which will not permit us to suppose that two others of the same denomination were present. This must be allowed to be a strong objection to the genuineness of that article of the *three* Preestes; but it is not the only one. All the other Characters are particularly described, and most of them very much at large, whereas the whole that is said of the *other Nonne* and the *three Preestes* is contained in these two lines [ver. 163, 4.] at the end of the Prioresses character:

> Another Nonne also with hire had she,
> That was hire Chapellein, and Preestes thre.

Where it is also observable, that the single circumstance of description is false; for no Nonne coud be a Chaplain. The chief duty of a Chaplain was to say Mass, and to hear Confession, neither of which offices coud regularly be performed by a Nonne, or by any woman [7].

It should seem therefore, that we have sufficient ground to reject these two lines, or at least the second, as an interpolation [8]; by which means we shall get rid of *two* of the Preestes, and the detail of the characters will agree with the gross number in ver. 24, Chaucer himself being included among the *nine and twenty*. As Novellists generally delight in even numbers, it is not improbable that the Host was intended to be the thirtieth. Though not under the same obligation with the other Pilgrims, he might nevertheless tell his Tale among them as a Volunteer.

§ VII. This leads me, in the third place, to examine what the *agreement* was, which the Pilgrims entered into, at the suggestion of the Host, with respect to the number of Tales that each person was to tell. The proposal of the Host stands thus, with very little variation, in all the MSS.

This is the point—says he, ver. 792—5.

> That echo of you, to shorten with youre way,
> In this viage shal tellen tales tway,
> To Canterbury ward, I mene it so,
> And homeward he shal tellen other two—

From this passage we should certainly conclude, that each of them was to tell *two tales* in the

[7] It appears that some Abbesses did at one time attempt to hear the Confessions of their Nuns, and to exercise some other smaller parts of the clerical function: but this practice, I apprehend, was soon stopped by Gregory IX, who has forbidden it in the strongest terms. Decretal. l. v. tit. 38. c. x. Nova quædam nostris sunt auribus intimata, quod Abbatissæ moniales proprias benedicunt; *ipsarum quoque confessiones in criminibus audiunt*, et legentes Evangelium præsumunt publice prædicare: Cum igitur id absonum sit et pariter absurdum, Mandamus quatenus ne id de cætero fiat cunctis firmiter inhibere. If these presumptuous Abbesses had ventured to say Mass, his Holyness would doubtless have thundered still louder against them.

[8] My notion, I cannot call it opinion, of the matter is this; that the first of these lines did really begin the character of the Nonne, which Chaucer had originally inserted in this place together with that of the Nonnes Preest, at as great length as the other characters, but that they were both afterwards expunged, either by himself, or, more probably, by those who published his work after his death, for reasons of nearly the same kind with those which occasioned the suppression of the latter part of the Cokes Tale. I suspect our Bard had been rather too gay in his description of these two Religious persons. See a little concerning the Preest, ver. 15453—65.

If it should be thought improbable that an interpolator would insert any thing so absurd and contradictory to the Author's plan as the second line, I beg leave to suggest, that it is still more improbable that such a line should have come from the Author himself; and further, I think I can promise, in the course of the following work, to point out several other undoubted interpolations, which are to the full as absurd as the subject of our present discussion.

journey to Canterbury, and *two more* in the journey homeward: but all the other passages, in which mention is made of this agreement, would rather lead us to believe, that they were to tell only *one* Tale in each journey; and the Prologue to the Parsons Tale strongly confirms this latter supposition. The Host says there, [ver. 17327.]

—"Now lacketh us no tales mo than on"—

and calling upon the Parson to tell this one tale, which was wanting, he says to him, [ver. 17335.]

—"ne breke thou not our play,
For every man, save thou, hath told his tale."

The Parson therefore had not told any tale before, and only one tale was expected from him (and consequently from each of the others) upon that journey.

It is true, that a very slight alteration of the passage first cited would reconcile that too to this hypothesis. If it were written—

That eche of you, to shorten with youre way,
In this viage shal tellen tales tway;
To Canterbury ward, I mene it, *o*,
And homeward he shal tell another *to*—

the original proposition of the Host would perfectly agree with what appears to have been the subsequent practice. However, I cannot venture to propose such an alteration of the text, in opposition to so many MSS. some of them of the best note; and therefore the Reader, if he is so pleased, may consider this as one of those inconsistencies, hinted at above, which prove too plainly that the author had not finished his work.

§ VIII. The remainder of the Prologue is employed in describing the *Characters* of the Pilgrims, and their first setting out upon their journey. The little that it may be necessary to say in illustration of some of the Characters I shall reserve for the Notes. The circumstances of their setting out are related succinctly and naturally; and the contrivance of appointing the Knight *by lot* to tell the first tale is a happy one, as it affords the Author the opportunity of giving his work a splendid opening, and at the same time does not infringe that apparent equality, upon which the freedom of discourse and consequently the ease and good humour of every society so entirely depends. The general satisfaction, which this appointment is said to give to the company, puts us in mind of a similar gratification to the secret wishes of the Grecian army, when the lot of fighting with Hector falls to Ajax; though there is not the least probability that Chaucer had ever read the Iliad, even in a translation.

§ IX. THE KNIGHTES TALE, or at least a Poem upon the same subject, was originally composed by Chaucer, as a separate work. As such it is mentioned by him, among some of his other works, in the *Legende of gode women*, [ver. 420, l.] under the title of—"al the love of Palamon and Arcite of Thebes, though the storie is knowen lite—;" and the last words seem to imply that it had not made itself very popular. It is not impossible that at first it was a mere translation of the Theseida of Boccace, and that its present form was given it, when Chaucer determined to assign it the first place among his Canterbury tales. As the Theseida, upon which this tale is entirely founded, is very rarely to be met with[9], it may be not

[9] The letter, which Boccace sent to the Fiammetta with this poem, is dated *di Napoli a 15 d'Aprile* 1341. Lettere di xiii. Uomini Illust. Ven. 1564. I believe that date is a true one, and it is remarkable, as being the very year and month, in which Petrarch received the Laurel at Rome. See Petr. Ep. Famil. XII. 12.

The first Edition of the Theseida, according to Quadrio [t. vi. p. 462.], was without date, and under the mistaken title of *Amasonide*, which might have been proper enough for the first book. It was soon after however reprinted, with its true title, at Ferrara, in 1475, fol. Dr. Askew was so obliging as to lend me the only copy of this edition, which I have ever heard of, in England. The Reverend Mr. Crofts has a later edition in 4to. printed at Venice, in

unpleasing to the Reader to see here a short summary of it, which will shew with what skill Chaucer has proceeded in reducing a poem of about ten thousand lines to a little more than two thousand, without omitting any material circumstance.

The Theseida is distributed into twelve Books or Cantoes.

B. I. contains the war of Theseus with the Amazons; their submission to him; and his marriage with Hippolyta.

B. II. Theseus, having spent two years in Scythia, is reproached by Perithous in a vision, and immediately returns to Athens with Hippolyta and her sister Emilia. He enters the city in triumph; finds the Grecian Ladies in the temple of Clemenzia; marches to Thebes; kills Creon, &c. and brings home Palemone and Arcita, who are

Damnati—ad eterna presone.

B. III. Emilia, walking in a garden and singing, is heard and seen first by Arcita[10], who calls Palemone. They are both equally enamoured of her, but without any jealousy or rivalship. Emilia is supposed to see them at the window, and to be not displeased with their admiration.—Arcita is released at the request of Perithous; takes his leave of Palemone, with embraces, &c.

B. IV. Arcita, having changed his name to *Pentheo*, goes into the service of Menelaus at Mycenæ, and afterwards of Peleus at Ægina. From thence he returns to Athens and becomes a favourite servant of Theseus, being known to Emilia, though to nobody else; till after some time he is overheard making his complaint in a wood, to which he usually resorted for that purpose, by Pamphilo, a servant of Palemone.

B. V. Upon the report of Pamphilo, Palemone *begins* to be jealous of Arcita, and is desirous to get out of prison in order to fight with him. This he accomplishes with the assistance of

---

1528, but in that the poem has been *riveduto e emendato*, that is, in plain English, modernized. I cannot help suspecting that Salvini, who has inveighed with great bitterness against the corruptions of the printed Theseida, [Manni, Ist. del Decam. p. 52.] had only examined this last edition; for I observe that a Stanza which he has quoted (from some MS. as I suppose) is not near so correct as it is in the edition of 1475. As this Stanza contains Boccace's own account of the intention of his Poem, I shall transcribe it here from that edition. It is the beginning of his conclusion.

Poi che le Muse nude cominciaro
Nel conspeto de gli omeni ad andare,
Gai fur de quelli che [gia] le exercitaro
Con bello stilo in *honesto* parlare,
E altri in *amoroso* lo operaro;
Ma tu, o libro, primo al lor cantare
Di *Marte* fai gli affanni sostenuti,
Nel vulgar latino mai piu non veduti.

This plainly alludes to a passage in Dante, de Vulgari Eloquentia, l. ii. c. ii. where, after having pointed out the three great subjects of Poetry, viz. *Arma, Amores, et Rectitudinem*, (War, Love, and Morality,) and enumerated the illustrious writers upon each, he adds: *Arma vero nullum Italum adhuc invenio poetasse.* Boccace therefore apparently prides himself upon having supplied the defect remarked by Dante, and upon being the first who taught the Italian Muses to sing of *Arms*.

Besides other variations for the worse, the fifth line in Salvini's copy is written thus;

Ed altri in *dolci modi* l operaro—

by which means the allusion to Dante is rendered incomplete.

[10] In describing the commencement of this Amour, which is to be the subject of the remainder of the poem, Chaucer has entirely departed from his author in three principal circumstances, and, I think, in each with very good reason. 1. By supposing Emilia to be seen first by Palamon, he gives him an advantage over his rival which makes the catastrophe more consonant to poetical justice. 2. The picture which Boccace has exhibited of two young princes, violently enamoured of the same object, without jealousy or rivalship, if not absolutely unnatural, is certainly very insipid and unpoetical. 3. As no consequence is to follow from their being seen by Emilia at this time, it is better, I think, to suppose, as Chaucer has done, that they are not seen by her.

ilo, by changing clothes with Alimeto, a Physician. He goes armed to the wood in f Arcita, whom he finds sleeping. At first they are very civil and friendly to each [1]. Then Palemone calls upon Arcita to renounce his pretensions to Emilia, or to fight im. After many long expostulations on the part of Arcita, they fight, and are discovered y Emilia, who sends for Theseus. When he finds who they are, and the cause of their nce, he forgives them, and proposes the method of deciding their claim to Emilia by a : of an hundred on each side, to which they gladly agree.

I. Palemone and Arcita live splendidly at Athens, and send out messengers to summon riends, who arrive; and the principal of them are severally described, viz. Lycurgus, , Phocus, Telamon, &c. Agamemnon, Menelaus, Castor, and Pollux, &c. Nestor, er, Perithous, Ulysses, Diomedes, Pygmalion, Minos, &c. with a great display of ancient and mythology.

II. Theseus declares the laws of the combat, and the two parties of an hundred on each e formed. The day before the combat, Arcita, after having visited the temples of all ds, makes a formal prayer to Mars. The Prayer, *being personified* [12], is said to go and find a his temple in Thrace, which is described; and Mars, upon understanding the message, favourable signs to be given to Arcita. In the same manner Palemone closes his is observances with a prayer to Venus. His Prayer, *being also personified*, sets out for the of Venus on Mount Citherone, which is also described; and the petition is granted. he sacrifice of Emilia to Diana is described; her prayer; the appearance of the God- and the signs of the two fires.—In the morning they proceed to the Theatre with their ive troops, and prepare for the action. Arcita puts up a private prayer to Emilia, and nes his troop publickly; and Palemone does the same.

---

[1] En sieme se fer festa di bon core,
E li loro accidenti si narraro. Thes. l. v.

rrely too much in the style of Romance. Chaucer has made them converse more naturally. He has also ly avoided to copy Boccace in representing Arcite as more moderate than his rival.

[12] Era alor forsi Marte in exercitio
Di chiara far la parte rugincsa
Del grande suo e horribile hospitio,
Quando de Arcita LA ORATION pietosa
Pervenne li per fare il dato offitio,
Tutta ne lo aspecto lagrimosa;
La qual divene di spavento muta,
Come di Marte hebbe laca veduta. Thes. l. vii

contrivance, of *personifying* the Prayers and sending them to the several deities, is only in order to introduce tion of the respective temples, it will be allowed, I believe, that Chaucer has attained the same end by more ction. It is very probable that Boccace caught the idea of making the Prayers *persons* from Homer, with rks he was better acquainted than most of his contemporaries in this part of the world; and there can be , I suppose, that Chaucer's imagination, in the expedient which he has substituted, was assisted by the l edifices which he had himself seen erected for the decoration of Turnaments.

mbat, which follows, having no foundation in ancient history or manners, it is no wonder that both poets ave admitted a number of incongruous circumstances into their description of it. The great advantage aucer has over his original in this respect is, that he is much shorter. When we have read in the Theseida d learned catalogue of all the heroes of Antiquity brought together upon this occasion, we are only the more l to see Theseus, in such an assembly, conferring the honour of Knighthood upon the two Theban chieftains.

E senza stare con non piccolo honore
Cinse le spade a li qui scudieri,
E ad Arcita Poluce e Castore
Calciaro d'oro li sproni e volontieri,
E Diomede e Ulixe di cuore
Calzati a Palemone, e cavalieri
Ambedui furono alora novelli
Li inamorati Theban damigieli. Thes. l. vii.

B. VIII. Contains a description of the battle, in which Palemone is taken prisoner.

B. IX. The horse of Arcita, being frighted by a Fury, sent from hell at the desire of Venus, throws him. However, he is carried to Athens in a triumphal chariot with Emilia by his side; is put to bed dangerously ill; and there by his own desire espouses Emilia.

B. X. The funeral of the persons killed in the combat Arcita, being given over by his Physicians, makes his will, in discourse with Theseus, and desires that Palemone may inherit all his possessions and also Emilia. He then takes leave of Palemone and Emilia, to whom he repeats the same request. Their lamentations. Arcita orders a sacrifice to Mercury, which Palemone performs for him, and dies.

B. XI. Opens with the passage of Arcita's soul to heaven, imitated from the beginning of the 9th Book of Lucan. The funeral of Arcita. Description of the wood felled takes up six Stanzas. Palemone builds a temple in honour of him, in which his whole history is painted. The description of this painting is an abridgement of the preceding part of the Poem.

B. XII. Theseus proposes to carry into execution Arcita's will by the marriage of Palemone and Emilia. This they both decline for some time in formal speeches, but at last are persuaded and married. The Kings, &c. take their leave, and Palemone remains—"in gioia e in diporto con la sua dona nobile e cortese."

From this sketch of the Thescida it is evident enough that Chaucer was obliged to Boccace[13] for the Plan and principal incidents of the KNIGHTES TALE; and in the Notes upon that tale I shall point out some passages, out of many more, which are literal translations from the Italian.

§ x. When the *Knight* has finished his Tale, the *Host* with great propriety calls upon the *Monk*, as the next in rank among the men, to tell the next Tale; but, as it seems to have been the intention of Chaucer to avail himself of the variety of his Characters, in order to distribute alternate successions of Serious and Comic, in nearly equal proportions, throughout his work, he has contrived, that the *Hostes* arrangement shall be set aside by the intrusion of the *dronke Miller*, whose tale is such as might be expected from his character and condition, a complete contrast to the *Knightes*.

§ xi. I have not been able to discover from whence the Story of the MILLERS TALE is taken; so that for the present I must give Chaucer credit for it as his own invention, though in general he appears to have built his Tales, both serious and comic, upon stories, which he found ready made. The great difference is, that in his serious pieces he often follows his author with the servility of a mere translator, and in consequence his narration is jejune and constrained; whereas in the comic, he is generally satisfied with borrowing a slight hint of his subject, which he varies, enlarges, and embellishes at pleasure, and gives the whole the air and

[13] To whom Boccace was obliged is a more difficult subject of enquiry. That the Story was of his own invention, I think is scarcely credible. He speaks of it himself as *very ancient*. [Lett. alla Fiammetta. *Biblioth. Smith. App.* p. cxli.] Trovata una antichissima Storia, e al più delle genti non manifesta, in latino volgare, acciocchè più dilettasse e massimamente a voi, che già con sommo titolo le mie rime esaltaste, ho ridotta. He then tells her, that she will observe that what is related under the name of *one* of the two lovers and of Emilia, is very similar to what had actually passed between herself and him; and adds—Se forse alcune cose soperchie vi fossono, il voler bene coprire ciò che non era onesto manifestare, da noi due in fuori, e'l volere la storia seguire, ne sono cagione. I am well aware however that declarations of this kind, prefixed to fabulous works, are not much to be depended upon. The wildest of the French Romances are commonly said by the Authors to be translated from some old *Latin* Chronicle at St. Denys. And certainly the Story of Palemone and Arcita, as related by Boccace, coud not be *very ancient*. If it was of Greek original, as I rather suspect, it must have been thrown into its present form, after the Norman Princes had introduced the manners of Chivalry into their dominions in Sicily and Italy.

The Poem in modern Greek political verses *De nuptiis Thesei et Emiliæ*, printed at Venice in 1529, is a mere translation of the *Theseida*. The Author has even translated the prefatory epistle addressed by Boccace to the Fiammetta.

n original; a sure sign, that his genius rather led him to compositions of the latter

ıe next tale is told by the REVE (who is represented above, ver. 589. as "a cholerick ·evenge of the *Miller's* tale. It has been generally said to be borrowed from the D. ix. N. 6. but I rather think that both Boccace and Chaucer, in this instance, have tever they have in common from an old *Fabliau*, or *Conte*, of an anonymous French *Gombert et des deux Clers*. The Reader may easily satisfy himself upon this head, by ı eye upon the French *Fabliau*, which has lately been printed with several others in France. See *Fabliaux et Contes*, Paris, 1756. t. ii. p. 115—124.

The COKES TALE is imperfect in all the MSS. which I have had an opportunity of . In MS. A. it seems to have been entirely omitted; and indeed I cannot help , that it was intended to be omitted, at least in this place, as in the *Manciples* hen the *Coke* is called upon to tell a tale, there is no intimation of his having told ı. Perhaps our Author might think, that three tales of *harlotrie*, as he calls it, ould be too much. However, as it is sufficiently certain, that the *Cokes* Prologue ·ginning of his Tale are genuine compositions, they have their usual place in this There was not the same reason for inserting the story of GAMELYN, which in some nnexed to the *Cokes Tale*. It is not to be found in any of the MSS. of the first and the manner, style, and versification, all prove it to have been the work of an ch inferior to Chaucer. I did not therefore think myself warranted to publish it a ıe among the Canterbury Tales, though as a Relique of our antient Poetry, and the , perhaps, of Shakespeare's *As you like it*, I coud have wished to see it more accu-ted, than it is in the only edition which we have of it.

n the PROLOGUE TO THE MAN OF LAWES TALE Chaucer recalls our attention to , if I may so call it, of his Drama, the journey of the Pilgrims. They had set out *the day began to spring*, ver. 824 and f. When the *Reve* was beginning to tell his tale, in the neighbourhood of Deptford and Greenwich, and it was *half way prime*; that se, *half way* past *prime*, about half hour after seven A. M. [ver. 3904, 5.]. How much ey were advanced upon their road at this time is not said; but the hour of the day out to us by two circumstances. We are first told [ver. 4422, 3.], that

> —" the Sonne
> The ark of his artificial day had ronne
> The fourthe part and half an hour and more;"—

lly [ver. 4432.], that he was "five and forty degrees high;" and this last circum-ɔ confirmed by the mention of a corresponding phænomenon that it is impossible to y error in the number. The *equality in length* of shadows to their projecting bodies ıappen, when the Sun is at the height of *five and forty* degrees. Unfortunately ıis description, though seemingly intended to be so accurate, will neither enable us e with the MSS. that it was "*ten of the clock*," nor to fix upon any other hour; as the ıstances just mentioned are not found to coincide in any part of the twenty-eighth, other, day of April[14] in this climate. All that we can conclude with certainty is, ı *not past* ten of the clock.

---

nty-eighth day of April, in the time of Chaucer, answering to our 6th or 7th of May, the Sun, in the ondon, rose about half hour after four, and the length of the artificial day was a little more than fifteen *rth part* of 15 hours (= 3h. 45m.) *and half an hour and more*—may be fairly computed to make together ich being reckoned from 4½ A. M. give the time of day exactly 9, A. M. But the Sun was not at the °, till above half hour after 9. In like manner, if we take the eighteenth day (according to all the Editions S.) we shall find that the Sun indeed was 45° high at 10 A. M. exactly, but that *the fourth part* of the day *our and more* had been completed at 9, A. M.

The compliments which Chaucer has introduced upon his own writings are modest enough, and quite unexceptionable; but if the reflection [ver. 4497. and f.] upon those who relate such stories as that of *Canace*, or of *Apollonius Tyrius*, was levelled at Gower, as I very much suspect, it will be difficult to reconcile such an attack to our notions of the strict friendship, which is generally supposed to have subsisted between the two bards[15]. The attack too at this time must appear the more extraordinary on the part of our bard, as he is just going to put into the mouth of his *Man of Lawe* a tale, of which almost every circumstance is borrowed from Gower. The fact is, that the story of *Canace* is related by Gower in his *Conf. Amant.* B. iii. and the story of [16]*Apollonius* (or *Apollynus*, as he is there called) in the VIIIth book of the same work; so that, if Chaucer really did not mean to reflect upon his old friend, his choice of these two instances was rather unlucky.

§ XV. THE MAN OF LAWES TALE, as I have just said, is taken, with very little variation, from Gower, *Conf. Amant.* B. ii. If there coud be any doubt, upon a cursory perusal of the two tales, which of them was written first, the following passage, I think, is sufficient to decide the question. At ver. 5506, Chaucer says,—

> Som men wold sayn, how that the child Maurice
> Doth this message until this Emperour:—

and we read in Gower, that Maurice is actually sent upon this message to the Emperour. We may therefore fairly conclude that in this passage Chaucer alludes to Gower, who had treated the same subject before him, but, as he insinuates, with less propriety.

I do not however suppose that Gower was the inventor of this tale. It had probably passed through several hands before it came to him. I find among the *Cotton* MSS. Cal. A. ii. fol. 69. an old English Rime, entitled "*Emare*," in which the heroine under that name goes through a series of adventures for the most part[17] exactly similar to those of Constance. But neither

---

In this uncertainty, I have left the text as I found it in all the best MSS. Only MS. HA. does not express the hour, but reads thus:—

> Yt was atte cloke—.

[15] There is another circumstance, which rather inclines me to believe, that their friendship suffered some interruption in the latter part of their lives. In the new edition of the *Confessio Amantis*, which Gower published after the accession of Henry IV, the verses in praise of Chaucer [fol. 190. b. col. 1. ed. 1532.] are omitted. See MS. *Harl.* 3869. Though perhaps the death of Chaucer at that time had rendered the compliment contained in those verses less proper than it was at first, that alone does not seem to have been a sufficient reason for omitting them, especially as the original date of the work, in the 16 of Richard II, is preserved. Indeed the only other alterations, which I have been able to discover, are toward the beginning and end, where every thing which had been said in praise of Richard in the first edition, is either left out or converted to the use of his successor.

[16] The History of *Apollonius King of Tyre* was supposed by Mark Welser, when he printed it in 1505, to have been translated from the Greek a thousand years before. [Fabr. Bib. Gr. V. 6. p. 821.] It certainly bears strong marks of a Greek original, though it is not, that I know, now extant in that language. The Rythmical poem, under the same title, in modern Greek, was re-translated (if I may so speak) from the Latin—*απο Λατινικης εις Ρωμαϊκην γλωσσαν. Du Cange*, Index Author. *ad Gloss. Græc.* When Welser printed it, he probably did not know that it had been published already, perhaps more than once, among the *Gesta Romanorum*. In an edition, which I have, printed at Rouen in 1521, it makes the 154th chapter. Toward the latter end of the XIIth Century, *Godfrey of Viterbo*, in his *Pantheon*, or universal Chronicle, inserted this Romance as part of the history of the third Antiochus, about 200 years before Christ. It begins thus [MS. *Reg.* 14 C. xi.]:

> Filia Seleuci regis stat clara decore
> Matreque defunctâ pater arsit in ejus amore.
> Res habet effectum, pressa puella dolet.

The rest is in the same metre, with one Pentameter only to two Hexameters.

Gower, by hi own acknowledgement, took his story from the *Pantheon*; as the Author, whoever he was, of *Pericles Prince of Tyre* professes to have followed Gower.

[17] The chief differences are, that *Emaré* is originally exposed in a boat for refusing to comply with the incestuous

was the author of this Rime the inventor of the story, for in fol. 70. a. he refers to his original "*in Romans*," or French; and in the last Stanza he tells us expressly—

> Thys ys on of *Brytayne layes*
> That was used by olde dayes.

Of the *Britaine layes* I shall have occasion to speak more at large, when I come to the *Franklein's Tale.*

§ XVI. *The Man of Lawes Tale* in the best MSS. is followed by the *Wife of Bathes Prologue and Tale*, and therefore I have placed them so here; not however merely in compliance with authority, but because, according to the common arrangement, in the *Merchant's Tale*[18] there is a direct reference to the *Wife of Bathes Prologue*, before it has been spoken. Such an impropriety I was glad to remove upon the authority of the best MSS. though it had been acquiesced in by all former Editors; especially as the same MSS. pointed out to me an other, I believe the true, place for both the *Merchant's* and the *Squier's* Tales, which have hitherto been printed immediately after the *Man of Lawes*. But of that hereafter.

§ XVII. The want of a few lines to introduce the WIFE OF BATHES PROLOGUE is, perhaps, one of those defects, hinted at above, which Chaucer would have supplied if he had lived to finish his work. The extraordinary length of it, as well as the vein of pleasantry that runs through it, is very suitable to the character of the speaker. The greatest part must have been of Chaucer's own invention, though one may plainly see that he had been reading the popular invectives against marriage and women in general; such as, the ROMAN DE LA ROSE; VALERIUS AD RUFINUM *de non ducendâ uxore;* and particularly HIERONYMUS *contra Jovinianum*[19].

§ XVIII. THE WIFE OF BATHES TALE seems to have been taken from the Story of *Florent* in Gower, *Conf. Amant.* B. i. or perhaps from an older narrative, in the *Gesta Romanorum*, or some such collection, from which the Story of Florent was itself borrowed. However that may have been, it must be allowed that Chaucer has considerably improved the fable by lopping off some improbable, as well as unnecessary, circumstances; and the transferring of the scene from Sicily to the Court of King Arthur must have had a very pleasing effect, before the fabulous majesty of that court was quite obliterated.

---

desires of the Emperour her father; that she is driven on the coast of *Galys*, or Wales, and married to the king of that country. The contrivances of the step-mother, and the consequences of them, are the same in both stories.

[18] V. 9559, *Justine* says to his brother *January*—

> The Wif of Bathe, if ye han understonde,
> Of mariage, which ye now han in honde,
> Declared hath ful wel in litel space—

alluding very plainly to this *Prologue* of the *Wife of Bath*. The impropriety of such an allusion in the mouth of *Justine* is gross enough. The truth is, that Chaucer has inadvertently given to *a character in the Merchant's Tale* an argument which *the Merchant himself* might naturally have used upon a similar occasion, *after* he had heard the *Wife of Bath*. If we suppose, with the Editions, *that the Wife of Bath had not at that time spoken her Prologue*, the impropriety will be increased to an incredible degree.

[19] The holy Father, by way of recommending celibacy, has exerted all his learning and eloquence (and he certainly was not deficient in either) to collect together and aggravate whatever he coud find to the prejudice of the female sex. Among other things he has inserted his own translation (probably) of a long extract from what he calls—"*libr aureolus Theophrasti de nuptiis.*"

Next to him in order of time was the treatise entitled "*Epistola Valerii ad Rufinum de non ducendâ uxore.*" MS. *Reg.* 12 D. iii. It has been printed, for the similarity of its sentiments, I suppose, among the works of St. Jerome, though it is evidently of a much later date. Tanner (from Woods MS. Coll.) attributes it to *Walter Map*. Bib. Brit. v. MAP. I should not believe it to be older; as John of Salisbury, who has treated of the same subject in his *Polycra.* l. viii. c. xi. does not appear to have seen it.

To these two books *Jean de Meun* has been obliged for some of the severest strokes in his *Roman de la Rose;* and Chaucer has transfused the quintessence of all the three works, upon the subject of Matrimony, into his *Wife of Bathes Prologue* and *Merchant's Tale*.

The old Ballad entitled "The Marriage of Sir Gawaine," [*Ancient Poetry*, vol. iii. p. 11.] which the learned Editor thinks may have furnished Chaucer with this tale, I should rather conjecture, with deference to so good a judge in these matters, to have been composed by one who had read both Gower and Chaucer.

§ XIX. THE TALES OF THE FRERE and THE SOMPNOUR are well ingrafted upon that of the *Wife of Bath*. The ill humour which shews itself between those two characters is quite natural, as no two professions at that time were at more constant variance. The Regular Clergy, and particularly the Mendicant Freres, affected a total exemption from all Ecclesiastical jurisdiction, except that of the Pope, which made them exceedingly obnoxious to the Bishops, and of course to all the inferior officers of the national hierarchy.

I have not been able to trace either of these tales to any author older than Chaucer, and possibly they may both have been built upon some traditional pleasantries, which were never before committed to writing.

§ XX. THE CLERKES TALE is in a different strain from the three preceding. He tells us, in his *Prologue*, that he learned it *from Petrarch at Padua*; and this, by the way, is all the ground that I can find for the notion that Chaucer had seen Petrarch [20] in Italy. It is not easy to say why Chaucer should choose to own an obligation for this tale to Petrarch rather than to Boccace, from whose *Decameron*, D. x. N. 10. it was translated by Petrarch in 1373, the year before his death, as appears by a remarkable letter, which he sent with his translation to Boccace. *Opp. Petrarch.* p. 540—7. Ed. Bas. 1581. It should seem too from the same letter, that the story was not invented by Boccace, for Petrarch says, "that it had always pleased him *when he heard it many years before*," [21] whereas he had not seen the *Decameron* till very lately.

[20] I can find no older or better authority for this notion than the following passage in *Speght's* life of Chaucer, prefixed to the Edition in 1597. "Some write, that he with Petrarke was present at the marriage of Lionell Duke of Clarence with Violante daughter of Galeasius, Duke of Millaine: yet Paullus Jovius nameth not Chaucer; but Petrarke, he sayth, was there." It appears from an instrument in Rymer [*Liberat.* 42 E. III. m. 1.], that the Duke of Clarence passed from Dover to Calais, in his way to Milan, in the spring of 1368, with a retinue of 457 men and 1200 horses. That Chaucer might have attended the Duke upon this occasion is not impossible. He had been, probably, for some time in the king's service, and had received the year before a Grant of an annuity of 20 marks—pro bono servitio, quod dilectus Valettus noster, Galfridus Chaucer nobis impendit et impendet in futurum. *Pat.* 41 E. III. p. 1. m. 13. ap. Rymer. There is a curious account of the feast at this marriage in the *Chronica di Mantoua* of *Alipprandi* [Murator. *Antiq. Med. Ævi*, vol. v. p. 1187, & seq.], but he does not give the names of the

"Grandi Signori e Baroni Inghilese,

who were, as he says,

"Con Messere Lionell' in compagnia."

The most considerable of them were probably those 26 (Knights and others) who, before their setting out for Milan, procured the King's licence to appoint Attorneys general to act for them here. *Franc.* 42 E. III. m. 8. ap. Rymer. The name of Chaucer does not appear among them.

The embassy to *Genoa*, to which Chaucer was appointed in November 1372, might possibly have afforded him another opportunity of seeing Petrarch. But in the first place, it is uncertain whether he ever went upon that Embassy. If he did, the distance from *Genoa* to *Padua*, where Petrarch resided, is considerable; and I cannot help thinking that a reverential visit *from a Minister of the King of England* would have been so flattering to the old man, that either he himself or some of his biographers must have recorded it. On the other hand, supposing Chaucer at *Genoa*, it is to be presumed, that he would not have been deterred by the difficulties of a much longer journey from paying his respects to the first literary character of the age: and it is remarkable, that the time of this embassy, in 1373, is the precise time at which he coud have learned the story of Griseldis *from Petrarch at Padua*. For Petrarch in all probability made his translation *in that very year*, and he died in July of the year following.

The inquisitive and judicious author of *Mémoires pour la vie de Petrarque* gave us hopes [Pref. to t. ii. p. 6.], that he would shew, that Chaucer was in connexion *(en liaison)* with Petrarch. As he has not fulfilled his promise in a later (I fear, the last) volume of his very ingenious work, I suspect that his more accurate researches have not enabled him to verify an opinion, which he probably at first adopted upon the credit of some biographer of Chaucer.

[21] —Cum et mihi semper *ante multos annos audita* placuisset, et tibi usque adeo placuisse perpenderem, ut vulgari eam stylo tuo censueris non indignam, et fine operis, ubi rhetorum disciplina validiora quælibet collacari jubet

. In the *Ballade*, with which *the Clerk* concludes his Tale, I have changed the order of ›e last Stanzas, so as to make it end—

And let him *care*, and *wepe*, and wringe, and *waile*—

nediately after I have placed the MARCHANTS PROLOGUE, beginning—

Weping and *wailing*, *care* and other sorwe
I have enough—.

rangement, which recommends itself at first sight, is also supported by so many MSS. best authority, that, without great negligence or dullness, I coud not have either over- or rejected it, especially as the whole turn of the *Marchant's Prologue*, and the express ı of *Grisilde* in ver. 9100. demonstrate, that he is supposed to speak with the *Clerke's* ›sh in his memory.

:ı. The scene of the MARCHANTS TALE is laid in Italy, but none of the names, except ı and Justin, seem to be Italian, but rather made at pleasure; so that I doubt whether ry be really of Italian growth. The adventure of *the Pear-tree* I find in a small collec- Latin fables, written by one Adolphus, in Elegiac verses of his fashion, in the year As this fable has never been printed but once, and in a book not commonly to be met shall transcribe below [22] the material parts of it, and I dare say the Reader will not be ıxious to see any more.

. *loc. cit.* M. L'Abbé de Sade [*Mem. de Petr.* t. iii. p. 797.] says, that the Story of Griseldis is taken from an MS. in the library of M. Foucault, entitled, *Le parement des Dames*. If this should have been said upon the autho- *Manni* [Ist. del Decam. p. 603.], as I very much suspect, and if *Manni* himself meant to refer to M. Galland's *sur quelques anciens Poetes* [Mem. de l'Acad. des I. et B. L. t. ii. p. 686.], we must look still further for the original ›e's Novel. M. Galland says nothing, as I observe, of the *antiquity* of the MS. Le titre (he says) est *Le pare- Dames*, avec des explications en Prose, où l'on trouve l'histoire de Griselidis que feu M. Perrault a mise en t he says also expressly, that it was a work of *Olivier de la Marche*, who was not born till many years death of Boccace.

lphi Fabulæ, ap. Leyser. Hist. Poet. Medii Ævi, p. 2008.

Fabula 1.

Cæcus erat quidam, cui pulcra virago—
— — — — — —
In curtis viridi resident hi cespite quâdam
Luce. Petit mulier robur adire Pyri.
Vir favet, amplectens mox robur ubique lacertis.
Arbor adunca fuit, qua latuit juvenis.
Amplexatur eam dans basia dulcia. Terram
Incepit colere vomere cum proprio.
Audit vir strepitum; nam sæpe carentia sensus
Unius in reliquo, nosco, vigere solet.
Heu miser! exclamat; te lædit adulter ibidem.
Conqueror hoc illi qui dedit esse mihi.
Tunc Deus omnipotens, qui condidit omnia verbo,
Qui sua membra probat, vascla velut figulus,
Restituens aciem misero, tonat illico; Fallax
Femina, cur tantâ fraude nocere cupis?
— — — — — — — —
Percipit illa virum. Vultu respondet alacri:
Magna dedi medicis; non tibi cura fuit.
Ast, ubi lustra sua satis uda petebat Apollo,
Candida splendescens Cynthia luce merâ,
Tunc sopor irrepsit mea languida corpora: quædam
Astitit: insonuit auribus illa meis.
Ludere cum juvene studeas in roboris alto;
Prisca viro dabitur lux cito, crede mihi.

Whatever was the real original of this Tale, the Machinery of the Faeries, which Chaucer has used so happily, was probably added by himself; and indeed, I cannot help thinking, that his *Pluto* and *Proserpina* were the true progenitors of *Oberon* and *Titania*[23], or rather, that they themselves have, once at least, deigned to revisit our poetical system under the latter names.

§ XXIII. THE PROLOGUE to *the Squier's Tale* appears now for the first time in print. Why it has been omitted by all former Editors I cannot guess, except, perhaps, because it did not suit with the place, which, for reasons best known to themselves, they were determined to assign to *the Squier's Tale*, that is, after *the Man of Lawe's* and before *the Marchant's*. I have chosen rather to follow the MSS. of the best authority in placing *the Squier's Tale* after *the Marchant's*, and in connecting them together by this Prologue, agreeably, as I am persuaded, to Chaucer's intention. The lines which have usually been printed by way of Prologue to *the Squier's Tale*, as I believe them to have been really composed by Chaucer, though not intended for *the Squier's* Prologue, I have prefixed to *the Shipman's Tale*, for reasons, which I shall give when I come to speak of that Tale.

§ XXIV. I should have been very happy if the MSS. which have furnished the SQUIERS Prologue, had supplied the deficient part of his TALE, but I fear the judgement of Milton was too true, that this story was "*left half-told*" by the author. I have never been able to discover the probable original of this tale, and yet I should be very hardly brought to believe that the whole, or even any considerable part of it, was of Chaucer's invention.

§ XXV. We are now arrived with the common Editions, though by a different course, at the FRANKELEINES TALE; and here again we must be obliged to the MSS. not indeed, as in the last instance, for a *new* Prologue, but for authorising us to prefix to this Tale of *the Frankelein* a Prologue, which in the common Editions is prefixed to the Tale of *the Marchant*, together with the true Prologue of that Tale, as printed above. It is scarce conceivable how these two Prologues coud ever be joined together and given to the same character, as they are not only entirely unconnected, but also in one point directly contradictory to each other; for in that, which is properly *the Marchant's*, he says expressly [ver. 9110.], that he had been married "*two monthes* and not more;" whereas in the other, the Speaker's chief discourse is about *his son*, who is *grown up*. THIS therefore, upon the authority of the best MSS. I have restored to *the Frankelein*; and I must observe, that the sentiments of it are much more suitable to *his* character than to that of *the Marchant*. It is quite natural, that a wealthy land-holder, of a generous disposition, as he is described [ver. 333—62.], who has been Sheriff, Knight of the Shire, &c. should be anxious to see his son, as we say, *a Gentleman*, and that he should talk slightingly of money in comparison with polished manners and virtuous endowments; but neither the character which Chaucer has drawn of *his Marchant*, nor our general notions of the profession *at that time*, prepare us to expect from him so liberal a strain of thinking.

§ XXVI. THE FRANKELEINS TALE, as he tells us himself, is taken from a *British Lay*[24]; and

---

Quod feci. Dominus ideo tibi munera lucis
Contulit: idcirco munera redde mihi.
Addidit ille fidem mulieri, de prece cujus
Se sanum credit, mittit et omne nefas.
— — — — — —

The same story is inserted among *The Fables of Alphonse*, printed by Caxton in English, with those of *Æsop*, *Avian and Pogge*, without date; but I do not find it in the original Latin of Alphonsus, MS. Reg. 10. B. xii. or in any of the French translations of his work that I have examined.

[23] This observation is not meant to extend further than *the King and Queen* of Faery; in whose characters, I think it is plain, that Shakespeare, in imitation of Chaucer, has dignified our Gothic Elves with the manners and language of the classical Gods and Goddesses. In the rest of his Faery system, Shakespeare seems to have followed the popular superstition of his own time.

[24] Les premieres Chansons Françoises furent nommées des LAIS; says M. de la Ravaliere, *Poes. du Roi. de Nav.* t. i. p. 215. And so far I believe he is right. But I see no foundation for supposing with him, in the same page, that the

the names of persons and places, as well as the scene and circumstances of the story, make this account extremely probable. The Lay itself is either lost, or buried, perhaps for ever, in

---

LAY was *une sorte d'Elegie*, and that it was derived *du mot Latin* Lessus, *qui signifie des plaintes*; or [in p. 217.] that it was *la chanson—la plus majestueuse et la plus grave*. It seems more probable that *Lai* in French was anciently a generical term, answering to *Song* in English. The passage which M. de la Ravaliere has quoted from *Le Brut*,

" Molt sot de *Lais*, molt sot de notes "—

is thus rendered by our *Layamon*. [See before, Essay, &c. n. 46.]

Ne cuthe na mon swa muchel of *song*.

The same word is used by Peirol d'Alvergna, MS. Crofts, fol. lxxxv. to denote the *songs* of *birds*, certainly not of the *plaintive* kind.

Et li ausell s'en van enamoran
L'uns per l'autre, et fan vantas (or *cantas*) et *lais*.

For my own part I am inclined to believe, that *Liod*, Island. *Lied*, Teuton. *Leoth*, Saxon, and *Lai*, French, are all to be deduced from the same Gothic original.

But beside this general sense, the name of *Lay* was particularly given to *the French translations* of certain Poems, originally composed in Armorican Bretagne, and in the Armorican language. I say *the French translations*, because *Lay*, not being (as I can find) an Armorican word, coud hardly have been the name, by which a species of Poetry, not imported from France, was distinguished by the first composers in Bretagne.

The chief, perhaps the only, collection of these *Lais* that is now extant, was translated into French octosyllable verse by a Poetess, who calls herself *Marie*; the same, without doubt, who made the translation of *Esope*, quoted by Pasquier [*Rech.* l. viii. ch. i.] and Fauchet [L. ii. n. 84.], and placed by them in the reign of St. Louis, about the middle of the XIIIth century. Both her works have been preserved together in MS. *Harl.* 978. in a fair hand, which I see no reason to judge more recent than the latter end of that Century.

The *Lais*, with which only we are at present concerned, were addressed by her to some king. Fol. 139.

En le honur de vous, *noble reis*,
Ki tant estes prux e curteis,
A ki tute joie se encline,
E en ki quoer tuz biens racine.
M'entremis des *lais* assembler,
Par rime faire e reconter.—

A few lines after, she names herself.

Oez, Seignurs, ke dit *Marie*.

The titles of the Poems in this collection, to the number of twelve, are recited in the Harleian Catalogue. They are, in general, the names of the principal persons in the several Stories, and are most of them evidently Armorican; and I think no one can read the Stories themselves without being persuaded, that they were either really translated from the Armorican language, or at least composed by one who was well acquainted with that language and country.

Though these Poems of Marie have of late been so little known as to have entirely escaped the researches of Fauchet and other French Antiquaries, they were formerly in high estimation. *Denis Piramus*, a very tolerable versifier of the *Legend of St. Edmund the King* [MS. *Cotton.* Dom. A. xi.], allows that *Dame Marie*, as he calls her, had great merit in the composition of her LAYS, *though they are not all true*—

E si en est ele mult loee,
E la ryme par tut amee.

A translation of her *Lays*, as it should seem, into one of the Northern languages was among the books given by Gabriel de la Gardie to the University of Upsal, under the title of *Variæ Britannorum Fabulæ*. See the description of the book by Stephanius, in Cat. Libb. Septent. at the end of Hickes, Gr. A. S. edit. 1689, 4to. p. 180. That Chaucer had read them I think extremely probable, not only from a passage in his Dreme [ver. 1820—1926.], which seems to have been copied from the *Lay of Elidus*, but also from the manner in which he makes the Frankelein speak of the Bretons and their compositions. See the note on ver. 11021.

However, in Chaucer's time, there were other *British Lays* extant beside this collection by Marie. *Emaré* has been mentioned before, § xv. An old English *Ballad of Sir Gowther* [MS. *Reg.* 17 B. xliii.] is said by the writer to have been taken *out of one of the Layes of Britanye*: in another place he says—*the first Lay of Britanye*. The original of *the Frankelein's Tale* was probably a third. There were also *Lays*, which did not pretend to be *British*, as *Le Lay d'Aristote*, *Li Lais de l'Oiselet* [Fabliaux, tom. i.]. *Le Lai du Corn* by Robert Bikez [MS. *Bod.* 1687.] is said

one of those sepulchres of MSS. which, by courtesy, are called Libraries; but there are two imitations of it extant by Boccace, the first in the vth Book of his *Philocopo*, and the second in the *Decameron*, D. x. N. 5. They agree in every respect with each other, except that the scene and the names are different, and in the latter the narration is less prolix and the style less flowery than in the former, which was a juvenile work[25]. The only material point, in which Boccace seems to have departed from his original, is this; instead of "*the removal of the rocks*" the Lady desires "*a garden full of flowers and fruits of May, in the month of January;*" and some such alteration was certainly necessary, when the scene came to be removed from Bretagne to Spain and Italy, as it is in Boccace's novels[26]. I should guess that Chaucer has preserved pretty faithfully the principal incidents of the *British tale*, though he has probably thrown in some smaller circumstances to embellish his narration. The long list of virtuous women in Dorigene's Soliloquy is plainly copied from HIERONYMUS *contra Jovinianum*..

§ XXVII. Thus far I flatter myself I have been not unsuccessful in restoring the true order, and connexion with each other, of the *Clerkes*, the *Marchantes*, the *Squieres*, and the *Franklains* Tales, but with regard to the next step, which I have taken, I must own myself more dubious. In all the editions the Tales of *the Nonne* and *the Chanones Yeman* precede *the Doctoures*, but the best MSS. agree in removing those Tales to the end of *the Nonnes Preestes*, and I have not scrupled to adopt this arrangement, which, I think, is indisputably established by the following consideration. When *the Monk* is called upon for his Tale the Pilgrims were near Rochester [ver. 13932.], but when *the Chanon* overtakes them they were advanced to Boughton under Blee [ver. 16024.], twenty miles beyond Rochester, so that the Tale of *the Chanones Yeman*, and

by him to have been invented by *Garaduc*, who accomplished the adventure. In the Ballad, entitled "THE BOY AND THE MANTLE," [Anc. Poet. v. iii. p. 1.] which I suspect to have been made up out of *this Lay* and *Le Court Mantel*, the successful knight is called *Cradock*. Robert Bikez says further, that the Horn was still to be seen at Cirencester,

Q'fust a *Cirincetre*
A une haute feste,
La pureit il veer
Icest corn tout pur veir.
Ceo dist *Robert Bikez*—

In none of these Lays do we find the qualities attributed to that sort of composition by M. de la Ravaliere. According to these examples we should rather define the Lay to be a species of *serious* narrative poetry, of *a moderate length*, in a simple style and *light metre*. *Serious* is here opposed (not to *pleasant*, but) to *ludicrous*, in order to distinguish the Lay from the *Conte* or *Fabliau*; as on the other hand its *moderate length* distinguishes it from the *Geste*, or common *Roman*. All the Lays that I have seen are in *light metre*, not exceeding eight syllables. See before, Essay, &c. n. 60.

[25] I saw once an Edition of the *Philocopo*, printed at Venice, 1503, fol. with a letter at the end of it, in which the Publisher Hieronymo Squarzasicho says (if I do not misremember,) "that this work was written by Boccace at twenty-five years of age (about 1338), while he was at Naples in the house of John Barrile." *Johannes Barrillus* is called by Boccace [*Geneal. Deor.* l. xiv. c. 19.] *magni spiritus homo*. He was sent by King Robert to attend Petrarch to his coronation at Rome, and is introduced by the latter in his second Eclogue under the name of *Idæus*; ab Idâ, monte Cretensi, unde et ipse oriundus fuit. *Intentiones Eclogarum Franc. Petrarchæ*, MS. *Bod.* 558. Not knowing at present where to find that Edition, I am obliged to rely upon my memory only for this story, which I think highly probable, though it is not mentioned, as I recollect, by any of the other Biographers of Boccace. A good life of Boccace is still much wanted.

The adventures of *Florio* and *Biancofiore*, which make the principal subject of the *Philocopo*, were famous long before Boccace, as he himself informs us, l. i. p. 6. Ed. 1723. Hieronymo Squarzasicho, in the letter mentioned above, says, that the story, "anchora al nova insino ad ogi scripta in un librazolo de triste et male composto rime—dove il Boccaccio ni cavo questo digno et elegante libro." *Floris* and *Blancaflor* are mentioned as illustrious lovers by *Matfres Eymengau de Bezers*, a Languedocian Poet, in his *Breviari d'amor* dated in the year 1288. MS. *Reg.* 19 C. i. fol. 199. It is probable however that the Story was enlarged by Boccace, and particularly I should suppose that the *Love-questions* in l. v. (the fourth of which questions contains the Novel referred to in the text) were added by him.

[26] The *Conte Boiardo*, the precursor and model of Ariosto, in his *Orlando inamorato*, l. i. ca. 12. has inserted a Tale upon the plan of Boccace's two novels, but with considerable alterations, which have carried the Story, I apprehend, still further from its *British* original.

the Nonne to which it is annexed, cannot with any propriety be admitted till after *the* Tale, and consequently not till after *the Nonnes Preestes*, which is inseparably linked to *the Monk*.

III. These two Tales therefore of *the Nonne* and *the Chanones Yeman* being removed out ray, *the Doctoures* comes clearly next to *the Frankeleines*; but how they are to be connected r, and whether at all, is a matter of doubt. What I have printed by way of *Prologue Doctoures* Tale I found in one of the best MSS. but only in one: in the others it Prologue. The first line applies so naturally and smartly to *the Frankeleines* conclusion, m strongly inclined to believe it from the hand of Chaucer, but I cannot say so much five following. I would therefore only wish these lines to be received for the present, g to the Law-phrase, *de bene esse*, till they shall either be more authentically established seded by the discovery of the genuine Prologue.

X. In THE DOCTOURES TALE, beside Livy, who is quoted, Chaucer may possibly have l Gower in some particulars, who has also related the story of Virginia, *Conf. Amant.* ut he has not been a servile copyist of either of them.

:. *The Pardoneres Tale* has a *Prologue* which connects it with *the Doctoures*. There is retty long preamble, which may either make part of the Prologue, or of the Tale. The ffer in this point. I have chosen to throw it into the Tale, and to confine the Prologue I suppose to be its proper use, the introduction of the new Speaker. When he is once lete possession of his office of entertaining the company, his Prefaces or Digressions ll, I think, be equally considered as parts of his Tale.

here outline of THE PARDONERES TALE is to be found in the *Cento Novelle Antiche.* xxii.

I. The Tale of *the Shipman* in the best MSS. has no *Prologue*. What has been printed in the common Editions is evidently spurious. To supply this defect I have ventured, e authority of one MS. (and, I confess, not one of the best) to prefix to this Tale the , which has usually been prefixed to the Tale of *the Squier*. As this Prologue was edly composed by Chaucer, it must have had a place somewhere in this Edition, and if I rove that it was really intended by him for this place, I think the Reader will allow that e vacancy extremely well. *The Pardoneres tale* may very properly be called "*a thrifty* d he himself "*a learned man*" [ver. 12905—8.]; and all the latter part, though highly r in the mouth of the "*curteis Squier*," is perfectly suited to the character of *the Shipman*.

tale is generally supposed to be taken from the *Decameron*. D. viii. N. 1. but I should believe that Chaucer was obliged to some old French *Fableour*, from whom Boccace had rowed the ground-work of his Novel, as in the case of *the Reves* Tale. Upon either ion, a great part of the incidents must probably have been of his own invention.

II. The transition from the Tale of *the Shipman* to that of *the Prioresse* is happily managed. not been able to discover from what Legende of the Miracles of our Lady THE PRIOR-ALE is taken. From the scene being laid in Asia, it should seem, that this was he oldest of the many stories, which have been propagated, at different times, to excite y several merciless persecutions of the Jews, upon the charge of murthering Christian 27. The story of *Hugh of Lincoln*, which is mentioned in the last Stanza, is placed by w Paris under the year 1255.

---

e first four months of the *Acta Sanctorum* by Bollandus, I find the following names of Children canonized, been murthered by Jews: xxv Mart. *Willielmus Norwicensis.* 1144. *Richardus, Parisiis.* 1179. xvii Apr. *s, Bernæ.* 1267. *Wernerus, Wesaliæ.* an. cod. *Albertus, Poloniæ.* 1598. I suppose the remaining eight ould furnish at least as many more. See a Scottish Ballad [Rel. of Anc. Poet. v. i. p. 32.], upon one of these murthers. The Editor has very ingeniously conjectured that "Mirryland" in ver. 1. is a corruption of Perhaps the real occasion of the Ballad may have been what is said to have happened at *Trent*, in 1475, to ed *Simon*. The Cardinal Hadrian, about fifty years after, mentioning the Rocks of Trent, adds, "quo Judæi

f

§ XXXIII. Next to *the Prioresse* CHAUCER himself is called upon for his Tale. In the *Prologue* he has dropped a few touches descriptive of his own person and manner, by which we learn, that he was used to look much upon the ground; was of a corpulent habit; and reserved in his behaviour. His RIME OF SIRE THOPAS was clearly intended to ridicule the "palpable-gross" fictions of the common Rimers of that age, and still more, perhaps, the meanness of their language and versification. It is full of phrases taken from *Isumbras*, *Li beaus desconus*, and other Romances in the same style, which are still extant. A few of his imitations of them will be pointed out in the Notes.

§ XXXIV. For the more complete reprobation of this species of Riming, even *the Host*, who is not to be suspected of too refined a taste, is made to cry out against it, and to cut short Sire Thopas in the midst of his adventures. CHAUCER has nothing to say for his *Rime*, but that "*it is the best he can*" [ver. 13856.], and readily consents to tell another Tale; but having just laughed so freely at the bad poetry of his time, he might think it, perhaps, too invidious to exhibit a specimen of better in his own person, and therefore his other Tale is in prose, a mere translation from, *Le Livre de Melibee et de dame Prudence*," of which several copies are still preserved in MS.[28] It is in truth, as he calls it, [ver. 13868.] "*a moral tale vertuous*," and was probably much esteemed in its time, but, in this age of levity, I doubt some Readers will be apt to regret, that he did not rather give us the remainder of *Sire Thopas*.

§ XXXV. THE PROLOGUE OF THE MONKES Tale connects it with *Melibee*. The *Tale* itself is certainly formed upon the plan of *Boccace's* great work *de casibus virorum illustrium*, but Chaucer has taken the several Stories, of which it is composed, from different authors, who will be particularized in the Notes.

§ XXXVI. After a reasonable number of melancholy ditties, or Tragedies, as the Monk calls them, he is interrupted by the Knight, and the Host addresses himself to *the Nonnes Preest*, to tell them "*swiche thing as may* their *hertes glade*."

THE TALE OF THE NONNES PREEST is cited by Dryden, together with that of *the Wife of Bath*, as of Chaucer's own invention. But that great Poet was not very conversant with the authors of which Chaucer's library seems to have been composed. *The Wife of Bathes Tale* has been shewn above to be taken from Gower, and the Fable of the Cock and the Fox, which makes the ground of *the Nonnes Preestes Tale*, is clearly borrowed from a collection of Æsopean and other Fables, by *Marie* a French Poetess, whose collection of *Lais* has been mentioned before in n. 24. As her Fable is short and well told, and has never been printed, I shall insert it here at length[29], and the more willingly, because it furnishes a convincing proof, how able Chaucer was to work up an excellent Tale out of very small materials.

---

ob Simonis cædem no aspirare quidem audent. *Præf. ad librum de Serm. Lat.* The change of the name in the Song, from *Simon* to *Hugh*, is natural enough in *this* country, where similar stories of *Hugh of Norwich* and *Hugh of Lincoln* had been long current.

[28] Two copies of this work are in the Museum, MS. *Reg.* 19 C. vii. and 19 C. xi. in French Prose. Du Fresnoy, Biblioth. des Romans, v. ii. p. 248. mentions two copies of the same work *en vers, dans la Bibliotheque Seguier*.

[29] From MS. Harl. 978. f. 76.

D un cok recunte, ki estot
Sur un femer, e si chantot.
Par de lez li vient un gupilz,
Si l'apela par mux beaus diz.
Sire, fet il, muz te vei bel;
Unc ne vi si gent oisel.
Clere voiz as sur tute rien,
Fors tun pere, qe jo vi bien;
Unc oisel meux ne chanta;
Mes il le fist meux, kar il cluna.
Si puis]eo fere, dist li cocs.
Les eles bat, les oilz ad clos,
Chanter quida plus clerement.
Li gupil saut, e sil prent;

xvii. The sixteen lines, which are printed at the end of the *Nonnes Preestes Tale*, might s more properly be considered as the beginning of the Prologue to the succeeding Tale, ere certain what Tale was intended to succeed. In both Dr. Askew's MSS. the last of ines is read thus,—

Seide unto *the Nunne* as ye shul heer.—

ere are six more lines to introduce her Tale; but, as these six lines are manifestly for the purpose, I have chosen rather to adhere to the other MSS. which acknowledge lves defective in this part, and give us *the Nonnes Tale*, as I have done, without any ction. It is very probable, I think, that Chaucer himself had not determined, whether uld connect *the Nonnes Tale* with that of *the Nonnes Preest*, or whether he should interpose or two, or perhaps more, between them.

Tale of the Nonne is almost literally translated from the life of St. Cecilia in the *a aurea* of *Jacobus Januensis*. It is mentioned by Chaucer, as a separate work, in his *of good women*, [ver. 426.] under the title of "the life of Seint Cecile," and it still retains t marks that it was not originally composed in the form of a Tale to be *spoken* by *the* ⁿ. However there can be no doubt that Chaucer meant to incorporate it into this ion of Canterbury Tales, as the *Prologue of the Chanones Yeman* expressly refers to it.

Vers la forest od lui s'en va.
Par mi un champ, u il passa,
Curent apres tut li pastur;
Li chiens le huent tut entur.
Veit le gupil, ki le cok tient,
Mar le guaina si par eus vient.
Va, fet li cocs, si lur escrie,
Qe sui tuens, ne me larras mie.
Li gupil volt parle en haut,
E li cocs de sa buche saut.
Sur un haut fust s'est muntez.
Quant li gupilz s'est reguardez,
Mut par se tient enfantillé,
Que li cocs l'ad si enginné.
De mal talent e de droit ire
La buche comence a maudire,
Ke parole quant devereit taire.
Li cocs respunt, si dei jeo faire,
Maudire l'oil, ki volt cluiner,
Quant il deit guarder e guniter,
Que mal ne vient a lur Seignur.
Ceo funt li fol tut li plusur,
Parolent quant deivent taiser,
Teisent quant il deivent parler.

resemblance of Chaucer's Tale to this fable is obvious; and it is the more probable that he really copied from because no such Fable is to be found either in the Greek Æsop, or in any of the Latin compilations (that I have hich went about in the dark ages under the name of Æsop. Whether it was invented by Marie, or whether nslated it, with the rest of her fables, from the Anglo-Saxon version of Æsop by King Alfred, as she says I cannot pretend to determine. Though no Anglo-Saxon version of Æsop be now, as I can find, extant, there ve been one formerly, which may have passed, like many other translations into that language, under the f Alfred; and it may be urged in support of the probability of Marie's positive assertion, that she appears, ssages in her *Lais*, to have had some knowledge of English. I must observe that the name of the King, English Version she professes to follow, is differently stated in different MSS. In the best MS. *Harl.* 978. it is *Li reis Alured*. In a later MS. Vesp. B. xiv. it is *Li reis Henris*. Pasquier [*Recherches*, l. viii. c. i.] calls him *Auuert*, and Du Chesne (as quoted by Menage, v. Roman) *Li rois Mires*; but all the copies agree in making leclare, that she translated her work "*de l'Anglois en Roman*." A Latin Æsop, MS. *Reg.* 15 A. vii. has the ory of an English version by order of a *Rex Angliæ Affrus*.

e whole Introduction is in the style of a person *writing*, and not of one *speaking*. If we compare it with the ction to the Prioresses Tale, the difference will be very striking. See particularly ver. 1554.

Yet praye I you, that *reden* that I *write*—

§ XXXVIII. The introduction of *the Chanones Yeman* to tell a Tale, at a time when so many of the original characters remain to be called upon, appears a little extraordinary. It should seem, that some sudden resentment had determined Chaucer to interrupt the regular course of his work, in order to insert a Satire against the Alchemists. That their pretended science was much cultivated about this time [31], and produced its usual evils, may fairly be inferred from the Act, which was passed soon after, 5 H. IV. c. iv. to make it Felonie *to multiplie gold or silver, or to use the art of multiplication.*

§ XXXIX. In the PROLOGUE TO THE MANCIPLES TALE, the Pilgrims are supposed to be arrived at a little town called "Bob up and down, under the blee, in Canterbury way." I cannot find a town of that name in any Map, but it must have lain between Boughton, the place last mentioned, and Canterbury. The Fable of the Crow, which is the subject of THE MANCIPLES TALE, has been related by so many authors, from Ovid down to Gower, that it is impossible to say whom Chaucer principally followed. His skill in new dressing an old story was never, perhaps, more successfully exerted.

§ XL. After the *Tale of the Manciple* the common Editions, since 1542 [32], place what is called

---

and in ver. 15530. the Relater, or rather Writer, of the Tale, in all the MSS. except one of middling authority, is called "unworthy *Sone* of Eve." Such little inaccuracies are strong proofs of an unfinished work. See before p. l.

[31] The first considerable Coinage of Gold in this country was begun by Edward III, in the year 1343, and according to Camden. [in his *Remains*, Art. *Money*] "the Alchemists did affirm, as an unwritten verity, that the Rosenobles, which were coined soon after, were made by projection or multiplication Alchemical of Raymond Lully in the Tower of London." In proof of this, "besides the tradition of the Rabbies in that faculty," they alledged "the Inscription; *Jesus autem transiens per medium eorum ibat;*" which they profoundly expounded, *as Jesus passed invisible and in most secret manner by the middest of Pharisees, so that gold was made by invisible and secret art amidst the ignorant.* But others say, "that Text was the only amulet used in that credulous warfaring age to escape dangers in battles." Thus Camden. I rather believe it was an Amulet, or Charm, principally used against Thieves; upon the authority of the following passage of Sir John Mandeville, c. x. p. 137. "And an half myle fro Nazarethe is the Lepe of oure Lord: for the Jewes ladden him upon an highe roche for to make him lepe down and have slayn him: but Jesu passed amonges hem, and lepte upon another roche; and yit ben the steppes of his feet sene in the roche where he allyghte. And therfore seyn sum men whan thei dreden hem of Thefes on ony weye, or of Enemyes; *Jesus autem transiens per medium illorum ibat:* that is to seyne; *Jesus forsothe passynge be the myddes of hem he wente:* in tokene and mynde, that oure Lord passed thorghe out the Jewes crueltee, and scaped safly fro hem; *so surely mowe men passen the perile of Thefes.*" See also Catal. MSS. Harl. n. 2966. It must be owned, that a Spell against Thieves was the most serviceable, if not the most elegant, Inscription that coud be put upon Gold Coin.

Ashmole, in his *Theatrum Chemicum*, p. 443. has repeated this ridiculous story concerning Lully with additional circumstances, as if he really believed it; though Lully by the best accounts had been dead above twenty years before Edward III began to coin Gold.

The same Author (*Mercuriophilus Anglicus*, as he styles himself) has inserted among his *Hermetique Mysteries* (p. 213.) an old English Poem, under the title of *Hermes Bird*, which (he says in his Notes, p. 467.) was thought to have been written originally by *Raymund Lully*, or at least made English by Cremer, Abbot of Westminster and Scholar to Lully, p. 465. The truth is, that the Poem is one of *Lydgate's*, and had been printed by Caxton under its true title, *The Chorle and the Bird;* and the fable, on which it is built, is related by *Petrus Alphonsus* (*de Clericali Disciplinâ.* MS. *Reg.* 10 B. xii.) who lived above two hundred years before Lully.

[32] In the Edition of 1542, when *the Plowman's Tale* was first printed, it was placed *after* the Person's Tale. The Editor, whoever he was, had not assurance enough, it should seem, to thrust it into the body of the work. In the subsequent Editions however, as it had probably been well received by the public, upon account of its violent invectives against the Church of Rome, it was advanced to a more honourable station, next to the Manciple's Tale and *before* the Person's. The only account which we have of any MS. of this Tale is from Mr. Speght, who says (Note prefixed to *Plowman's Tale*), that he had "seene it in written hand in John Stowes Librarie in a booke of such antiquitie, as seemed to have been written neare to Chaucer's time." He does not say that it was *among the Canterbury Tales*, or that it had *Chaucer's name* to it. We can therefore only judge of it by the internal evidence, and upon that I have no scruple to declare my own opinion, that it has not the least resemblance to Chaucer's manner, either of writing or thinking, in his other works. Though he and Boccace have laughed at some of the abuses of religion and the disorders of Ecclesiastical persons, it is quite incredible that either of them, or even Wicliff himself, would have

the Plowman's Tale; but, as I cannot understand that there is the least ground of evidence, either external or internal, for believing it to be a work of Chaucer's, I have not admitted it into this Edition.

§ XLI. THE PERSONES PROLOGUE therefore is here placed next to *the Manciples Tale*, agreeably to all the MSS. which are known, and to every Edition before 1542. In this Prologue, which introduces the last Tale upon the journey to Canterbury, Chaucer has again pointed out to us the time of the day; but the hour by the clock is very differently represented in the MSS. In some it is *ten*, in others *two:* in most of the best MSS. *foure*, and in one *five*. According to the phænomena here mentioned, the Sun being 29° high, and the length of the Shadow to the projecting body as 11 to 6, it was *between four and five*. As by this reckoning there were at least three hours left to sunset, one does not well see with what propriety the Host admonishes the Person to *haste him*, because "*the Sonne wol adoun*," and to be "*fructuous in litel space;*" and indeed *the Person*, knowing probably how much time he had good, seems to have paid not the least regard to his admonition; for his Tale, if it may be so called, is twice as long as any of the others. It is entitled in some MSS. "*Tractatus de Pœnitentiâ*, pro Fabulâ, ut dicitur, Rectoris;" and I much suspect that it is a translation of some such treatise. I can not recommend it as a very entertaining or edifying performance at this day; but the Reader will be pleased to remember, in excuse both of Chaucer and his Editor, that, considering the Canterbury Tales as a great picture of life and manners, the piece would not have been complete, if it had not included the Religion of the time.

§ XLII. What is commonly called *the Retractation* at the end of the Person's Tale, in several MSS. makes part of that Tale; and certainly the appellation of "*litel tretise*" suits better with a single tale, than with such a voluminous work as the whole body of Canterbury Tales. But then on the other hand the recital, which is made in one part of it of several compositions of Chaucer, coud properly be made by nobody but himself. I have printed it, as I found it in MS. Ask. i. with a few corrections from other MSS. and in the Notes I shall give the best account that I can of it.

Having thus gone through the several parts of the Canterbury Tales, which are printed in this Edition, it may not be improper, in the conclusion of this Discourse, to state shortly the parts which are wanting to complete the journey *to* Canterbury: of the rest of Chaucer's intended Plan, as has been said before, we have nothing. Supposing therefore the number of the Pilgrims to have been *twenty-nine* (see before, § VI.), and allowing the Tale of *the Chanones Yeman* to stand in the place of that which we had a right to expect from *the Knightes Yeman*, the Tales wanting will be only those of the *five* City-Mechanics and the Ploughman. It is not likely that the Tales told by such characters would have been among the most valuable of the

railed at the whole government of the Church, in the style of this *Plowman's Tale*. If they had been disposed to such an attempt, their times would not have born it; but it is probable, that Chaucer, though he has been pressed into the service of Protestantism by some zealous writers, was as good a Catholic as men of his understanding and rank in life have generally been. The necessity of auricular Confession, one of the great scandals of Popery, cannot be more strongly inculcated than it is in the following *Tale of the Person*.

I will just observe, that Spenser seems to speak of the Author of *the Plowman's Tale* as a distinct person from Chaucer, though, in compliance, I suppose, with the taste of his age, he puts them both on the same footing. In the epilogue to *the Shepherd's Calendar* he says to his book,—

> Dare not to match thy pipe with *Tityrus* his stile,
> Nor with the Pilgrim that *the Ploughman* plaid awhile.

I know that Mr. Warton, in his excellent *Observations on Spenser*, v. i. p. 125. supposes this passage to refer to *the Visions of Pierce Ploughman;* but my reason for differing from him is, that the Author of the Visions never, as I remember, speaks of *himself* in the character of *a Ploughman*.

Of *the Pilgrim's Tale*, which has also, with as little foundation, been attributed to Chaucer (Speght's Life of Ch.) I shall speak in another place. See App. to Pref. A. n. e. p. v.

set; but they might, and probably would, have served to link together those which at present are unconnected; and for that reason it is much to be regretted, that they either have been lost, or, as I rather[33] believe, were never finished by the Author.

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

TO THE

ESSAY, AND INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE.

Essay, &c. p. xxxix. n. 61. A learned person, whose favours I have already acknowledged in the Gloss. v. Gcas, *cannot acquiesce* in this notion, "that the greatest part of Chaucer's heroic verses, when properly written and pronounced, are verses of eleven syllables;" and for a proof of the contrary he refers me particularly to the *Nonnes Preestes Tale*, ver. 14970, and the verses following and preceding. I am sorry that by an unguarded expression I should have exposed myself to a controversy, which can only be decided by a careful examination of the final syllables of between thirty and forty thousand lines. It would answer my purpose as well to say "*a great part*," instead of "*the greatest part*;" but in support of my first idea I must be permitted to observe, that I have carefully examined a hundred lines which precede, and as many which follow ver. 14970, and I find, that a clear majority of them, *as they are printed*, end in *e* feminine, and consequently, according to my hypothesis, have an eleventh syllable. I observe too, that several more *ought to have been printed* as ending with an *e* feminine; but whether the omission of it should be imputed to the defectiveness of the MSS. or to the negligence of the collator, I cannot be certain. See the concluding note of the Essay, &c. p. xlvi. and xlvii.

P. xxxix. n. 62. Add—It may not be improper here to observe further, that a third poem, which is mentioned in the Decameron in the same manner with the *Theseida* and the *Filostrato*, was also probably one of Boccace's own compositions. In the conclusion of the Third Day, it is said, that "Dioneo et la Fiammetta cominciarono a cantare *di Messer Guiglielmo et della dama del Vergiu*." There is an old French Romance, upon this subject, as I apprehend, in MS. Bodl. 2366. It is entitled *Le Romant de la Chastelaine du Veray*, and begins thus:

ne maniere de gens sont
Qui d'estre loyaulx semblant font—
Ainsi qu'il avint en Bourgoigne
D'un chevalier preux et hardi
Et de la dame du Vergy.——

The story is the same, in the main, with that of the 70th Novel in the Heptameron of the Queen of Navarre, from which, I suppose, the more modern *Histoire de la Comtesse du Vergi*, Par. 1722, is taken.

I cannot find that any Italian poem upon this subject is now extant; but the unaccountable neglect, with which the poetry of Boccace has been long treated by those very countrymen of his who idolize his prose, makes the supposition, I think, not improbable, that a small piece of this sort may have been suffered to perish, or even to lurk at this day, unpublished and unnoticed, in some Italian library.

Discourse, &c. p. li. n. 6. l. 7. The latest historical fact.] This passage should be compared with the n. on ver. 14709, and corrected accordingly.

P. lx. § xix. Add—I am obliged to Mr. Steevens for pointing out to me a story, which has a great resemblance, in its principal incidents, to *the Freres tale*. It is quoted by D'Artigny, *Memoires d'Histoire*, &c. T. iii. p. 238. from a collection of Sermons, by an anonymous Dominican, printed about the beginning of the xvith Century, under the title of "*Sermones discipuli*."

[33] When we recollect, that Chaucer's papers must in all probability have fallen into the hands of his Son Thomas, who, at the time of his father's death, was of full age, we can hardly doubt that all proper care was taken of them; and if the Tales in question had ever been inserted among the others, it is scarce conceivable that they should all have slipt out of all the Copies of this work, of which we have any knowledge or information. Nor is there any sufficient ground for imagining that so many Tales coud have been suppressed by design; though such a supposition may perhaps be admitted to account for the loss of some smaller passages. See above, n. 8.

THE

CANTERBURY TALES.

THE

CANTERBURY TALES.

THE PROLOGUE.

v. 1—90

ıat April with his shoures soto
ıte of March hath perced to the rote,
d every veine in swiche licour,
vertue engendred is the flour;
hirus eke with his sote brethe
ath in every holt and hethe
croppes, and the yonge sonne
e Ram his halfe cours yronne,
foules maken melodie,
n alle night with open eye,
hem nature in hir corages;
n folk to gon on pilgrimages,
res for to seken strange strondes,
alwes couthe in sondry londes;
lly, from every shires ende
nd, to Canterbury they wende,
lisful martyr for to seke,
hath holpen, whan that they were seke.
that, in that seson on a day,
erk at the Tabard as I lay,
enden on my pilgrimage
bury with devoute corage,
as come into that hostelrie
nd twenty in a compagnie
folk, by aventure yfalle
ip, and pilgrimes were they alle,
d Canterbury wolden ride.
ores and the stables weren wide,
e weren esed atte beste.
rtly, whan the sonne was gon to reste,
spoken with hem everich on,
of hir felawship anon,
forword erly for to rise,
re way ther as I you devise.
ıeles, while I have time and space,
orther in this tale pace,
h it accordant to reson,
ou alle the condition
hem, so as it semed me,
e they weren, and of what degre;
what araie that they were inne:
night than wol I firste beginne.

ıT ther was, and that a worthy man,
ıe time that he firste began
ut, he loved chevalrie,
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curtesie.
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
And therto hadde he ridden, no man ferre,
As wel in Cristendom as in Hethenesse,
And ever honoured for his worthinesse.
At Alisandre he was whan it was wonne.
Ful often time he hadde the bord begonne
Aboven alle nations in Prusse.
In Lettowe hadde he reysed and in Ruce,
No cristen man so ofte of his degre.
In Gernade at the siege eke hadde he be
Of Algesir, and ridden in Belmarie.
At Leyes was he, and at Satalie,
Whan they were wonne; and in the Grete see
At many a noble armee hadde he be.
At mortal batailles hadde he ben fiftene,
And foughten for our faith at Tramissene
In listes thries, and ay slain his fo.
This ilke worthy knight hadde ben also
Somtime with the lord of Palatie,
Agen another hethen in Turkie:
And evermore he hadde a sovereine pris.
And though that he was worthy he was wise,
And of his port as meke as is a mayde.
He never yet no vilanie ne sayde
In alle his lif, unto no manere wight.
He was a veray parfit gentil knight.
But for to tellen you of his araie,
His hors was good, but he ne was not gaie.
Of fustian he wered a gipon,
Alle besmotred with his habergeon,
For he was late ycome fro his viage,
And wente for to don his pilgrimage.

With him ther was his sone a yonge SQUIER,
A lover, and a lusty bacheler,
With lockes crull as they were laide in presse.
Of twenty yere of age he was I gesse.
Of his stature he was of even lengthe,
And wonderly deliver, and grete of strengthe.
And he hadde be somtime in chevachie,
In Flaundres, in Artois, and in Picardie,
And borne him wel, as of so litel space,
In hope to stonden in his ladies grace.
Embrouded was he, as it were a mede
Alle ful of fresshe floures, white and rede.

Singing he was, or floyting alle the day,
He was as fresshe as is the moneth of May.
Short was his goune, with sleves long and wide.
Wel coude he sitte on hors, and fayre ride.
He coude songes make, and wel endite,
Joste and eke dance, and wel pourtraie and write.
So hote he loved, that by nightertale
He slep no more than doth the nightingale.
Curteis he was, lowly, and servisable,
And carf before his fader at the table.

A Yeman hadde he, and servantes no mo
At that time, for him luste to ride so;
And he was cladde in cote and hode of grene.
A shefe of peacock arwes bright and kene
Under his belt he bare ful thriftily.
Wel coude he dresse his takel yemanly:
His arwes drouped not with fetheres lowe.
And in his hond he bare a mighty bowe.
A not-hed hadde he, with a broune visage.
Of wood-craft coude he wel alle the usage.
Upon his arme he bare a gaie bracer,
And by his side a sword and a bokeler,
And on that other side a gaie daggere,
Harnesed wel, and sharpe as point of spere:
A Cristofre on his brest of silver shene.
An horne he bare, the baudrik was of grene.
A forster was he sothely as I gesse.

Ther was also a Nonne, a Prioresse,
That of hire smiling was ful simple and coy;
Hire gretest othe n'as but by Seint Eloy;
And she was cleped madame Eglentine.
Ful wel she sange the service devine,
Entuned in hire nose ful swetely;
And Frenche she spake ful fayre and fetisly,
After the scole of Stratford atte bowe,
For Frenche of Paris was to hire unknowe.
At mete was she wel ytaught withalle;
She lette no morsel from hire lippes falle,
Ne wette hire fingres in hire sauce depe.
Wel coude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe,
Thatte no drope ne fell upon hire brest.
In curtesie was sette ful moche hire lest.
Hire over lippe wiped she so clene,
That in hire cuppe was no ferthing sene
Of grese, whan she dronken hadde hire draught.
Ful semely after hire mete she raught.
And sikerly she was of grete disport,
And ful plesant, and amiable of port,
And peined hire to contrefeten chere
Of court, and ben estatelich of manere,
And to ben holden digne of reverence.
But for to speken of hire conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous,
She wolde wepe if that she saw a mous
Caughte in a trappe, if it were ded or bledde.
Of smale houndes hadde she, that she fedde
With rosted flesh, and milk, and wastel bredo
But sore wept she if on of hem were dede,
Or if men smote it with a yerde smert:
And all was conscience and tendre herte.
Ful semely hire wimple ypinched was;
Hire nose tretis; hire eyen grey as glas;
Hire mouth ful smale, and therto soft and red;
But sikerly she hadde a fayre forehed.
It was almost a spanne brode I trowe;
For hardily she was not undergrowe.
Ful fetise was hire cloke, as I was ware.
Of smale corall aboute hire arm she bare
A pair of bedes, gauded all with grene;
And theron heng a broche of gold ful shene,
On whiche was first ywriten a crouned A,
And after, *Amor vincit omnia.*
Another Nonne also with hire hadde she,
That was hire chapelleine, and Preestes thre.

A Monk ther was, a fayre for the maistrie,
An out-rider, that loved venerie;
A manly man, to ben an abbot able.
Ful many a deinte hors hadde he in stable:
And whan he rode, men mighte his bridel here
Gingeling in a whistling wind as clere,
And eke as loude, as doth the chapell belle,
Ther as this lord was keper of the celle.
The reule of seint Maure and of seint Beneit,
Because that it was olde and somdele streit,
This ilke monk lette olde thinges pace,
And held after the newe world the trace.
He yave not of the text a pulled hen,
That saith, that hunters ben not holy men;
No that a monk, whan he is rekkeles,
Is like to a fish that is waterles;
This is to say, a monk out of his cloistre.
This ilke text held he not worth an oistre.
And I say his opinion was good.
What shulde he studie, and make himselven wood,
Upon a book in cloistre alway to pore,
Or swinken with his hondes, and laboure,
As Austin bit? how shal the world be served?
Let Austin have his swink to him reserved.
Therfore he was a prickasoure a right:
Greihoundes he hadde as swift as foul of flight:
Of pricking and of hunting for the hare
Was all his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.
I saw his sleves purfiled at the hond
With gris, and that the finest of the lond.
And for to fasten his hood under his chinne,
He hadde of gold ywrought a curious pinne:
A love-knotte in the greter end ther was.
His hed was balled, and shone as any glas,
And eke his face, as it hadde ben anoint.
He was a lord ful fat and in good point.
His eyen stepe, and rolling in his hed,
That stemed as a forneis of a led.
His botes souple, his hors in gret estat,
Now certainly he was a fayre prelat.
He was not pale as a forpined gost.
A fat swan loved he best of any rost.
His palfrey was as broune as is a bery.

A Frere ther was, a wanton and a mery,
A Limitour, a ful solempne man.
In all the ordres foure is non that can
So moche of daliance and fayre langage.
He hadde ymade ful many a mariage
Of yonge wimmen, at his owen cost.
Until his ordre he was a noble post.
Ful wel beloved, and familier was he
With frankeleins over all in his contree,
And eke with worthy wimmen of the toun:
For he had power of confession,
As saide himselfe, more than a curat,
For of his ordre he was licenciat.
Ful swetely herde he confession,
And plesant was his absolution.
He was an esy man to give penance,
Ther as he wiste to han a good pitance:
For unto a poure ordre for to give
Is signe that a man is wel yshrive.

.e gave, he dorste make avant,
e that a man was repentant.
ny a man so hard is of his herte,
' not wepe although him sore smerte.
e in stede of weping and praieres,
›te give silver to the poure freres.
ippet was ay farsed ful of knives,
ıncs, for to given fayre wives.
'tainly he hadde a mery note.
ıde he singe and plaien on a rote.
inges he bare utterly the pris.
ke was white as the flour de lis.
he strong was as a champioun,
ew wel the tavernes in every toun,
ery hosteler and gay tapstere,
:han a lazar or a beggere,
o swiche a worthy man as he
:th nought, as by his faculte,
·n with sike lazars acquaintance.
t honest, it may not avance,
:o delen with no swiche pouraille,
with riche, and sellers of vitaille.
over all, ther as profit shuld arise,
he was, and lowly of servise.
as no man nowher so vertuous.
the beste begger in all his hous :
ve a certaine ferme for the grant,
his bretheren came in his haunt.
ıugh a widewe hadde but a shoo,
sant was his *In principio*)
ld he have a ferthing or he went.
ırchas was wel better than his rent.
ge he coude as it hadde ben a whelp,
dayes, ther coude he mochel help.
·r was he nat like a cloisterere,
ıredbare cope, as is a poure scolere,
was like a maister or a pope.
ble worsted was his semicope,
ıund was as a belle out of the presse.
at he lisped for his wantonnesse,
:e his English swete upon his tonge ;
his harping, whan that he hadde songe,
·n twinkeled in his hed aright,
the sterres in a frosty night.
›rthy limitour was cleped Huberd.

ARCHANT was ther with a forked berd,
telee, and highe on hors he sat,
. his hed a Flaundrish bever hat.
:es clapsed fayre and fetisly.
ons spake he ful solempnely,
g alway the encrese of his winning.
d the see were kept for any thing
en Middelburgh and Orewell.
ud he in eschanges sheldes selle.
orthy man ful wel his wit besette ;
·iste no wight that he was in dette,
·efastly didde he his governance,
ıis bargeines, and with his chevisance.
he he was a worthy man withalle,
th to sayn, I n'ot how men him calle.

.ERK ther was of Oxenforde also,
nto logike hadde long ygo.
: was his hors as is a rake,
: was not right fat, I undertake ;
ıed holwe, and therto soberly.
·edbare was his overest courtepy,
hadde geten him yet no benefice,
ı nought worldly to have an office.
For him was lever han at his beddes hed
A twenty bokes, clothed in black or red,
Of Aristotle, and his philosophie,
Than robes riche, or fidel, or sautrie.
But all be that he was a philosophre,
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre,
But all that he might of his frendes hente,
On bokes and on lerning he it spente,
And besily gan for the soules praie
Of hem, that yave him wherwith to scolaie.
Of studie toke he moste cure and hede.
Not a word spake he more than was nede ;
And that was said in forme and reverence,
And short and quike, and ful of high sentence.
Souning in moral vertue was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.

A SERGEANT OF THE LAWE ware and wise,
That often hadde yben at the paruis,
Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.
Discrete he was, and of gret reverence :
He semed swiche, his wordes were so wise,
Justice he was ful often in assise,
By patent, and by pleine commissioun ;
For his science, and for his high renoun,
Of fees and robes had he many on.
So grete a pourchasour was nowher non.
All was fee simple to him in effect,
His pourchasing might not ben in suspect.
Nowher so besy a man as he ther n'as,
And yet he semed besier than he was.
In termes hadde he cas and domes alle,
That fro the time of king Will. weren falle.
Therto he coude endite, and make a thing,
Ther coude no wight pinche at his writing.
And every statute coude he plaine by rote.
He rode but homely in a medlee cote,
Girt with a seint of silk, with barres smale ;
Of his array tell I no lenger tale.

A FRANKELEIN was in this compagnie ;
White was his berd, as is the dayesie.
Of his complexion he was sanguin.
Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in win.
To liven in delit was ever his wone,
For he was Epicures owen sone,
That held opinion, that plein delit
Was verraily felicite parfite.
An housholder, and that a grete was he ;
Seint Julian he was in his contree.
His brede, his ale, was alway after on ;
A better envyned man was no wher non.
Withouten bake mete never was his hous,
Of fish and flesh, and that so plenteous,
It snewed in his hous of mete and drinke,
Of alle deintees that men coud of thinke,
After the sondry sesons of the yere,
So changed he his mete and his soupere.
Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in mewe,
And many a breme, and many a luce in stewe.
Wo was his coke, but if his sauce were
Poinant and sharpe, and redy all his gere.
His table dormant in his halle alway
Stode redy covered alle the longe day.
At sessions ther was he lord and sire.
Ful often time he was knight of the shire.
An anelace and a gipciere all of silk,
Heng at his girdel, white as morwe milk,
A shereve hadde he ben, and a countour.
Was no wher swiche a worthy vavasour.

An Haberdasher, and a Carpenter,
A Webbe, a Deyer, and a Tapiser,
Were alle yclothed in o livere,
Of a solempne and grete fraternite.
Ful freshe and newe hir gere ypiked was.
Hir knives were ychaped not with bras,
But all with silver wrought ful clene and wel,
Hir girdeles and hir pouches every del.
Wel semed eche of hem a fayre burgeis,
To sitten in a gild halle, on the deis.
Everich, for the wisdom that he can,
Was shapelich for to ben an alderman.
For catel hadden they ynough and rent,
And eke hir wives wolde it wel assent:
And elles certainly they were to blame.
It is ful fayre to ben ycleped madame,
And for to gon to vigiles all before,
And have a mantel reallich ybore.

A Coke they hadden with hem for the nones,
To boile the chikenes and the marie bones,
And poudre marchant, tart and galingale.
Wel coude he knowe a draught of London ale.
He coude roste, and sethe, and broile, and frie,
Maken mortrewes, and wel bake a pie.
But gret harm was it, as it thoughte me,
That on his shinne a mormal hadde he.
For blanc manger that made he with the best.

A Shipman was ther, woned fer by West:
For ought I wote, he was of Dertemouth.
He rode upon a rouncie, as he couthe,
All in a goune of falding to the knee.
A dagger hanging by a las hadde hee
About his nekke under his arm adoun.
The hote sommer hadde made his hewe al broun.
And certainly he was a good felaw.
Ful many a draught of win he hadde draw
From Burdeux ward, while that the chapman slepe.
Of nice conscience toke he no kepe.
If that he faught, and hadde the higher hand,
By water he sent hem home to every land.
But of his craft to reken wel his tides,
His stremes and his strandes him besides,
His herberwe, his mone, and his lodemanage,
Ther was non swiche, from Hull unto Cartage.
Hardy he was, and wise, I undertake:
With many a tempest hadde his berd be shake.
He knew wel alle the havens, as they were,
Fro Gotland, to the Cape de finistere,
And every creke in Bretagne and in Spaine:
His barge ycleped was the Magdelaine.

With us ther was a Doctour of Phisike,
In all this world ne was ther non him like
To speke of phisike, and of surgerie:
For he was grounded in astronomie.
He kept his patient a ful gret del
In houres by his magike naturel.
Wel coude he fortunen the ascendent
Of his images for his patient.
He knew the cause of every maladie,
Were it of cold, or hote, or moist, or drie,
And wher engendred, and of what humour,
He was a veray parfite practisour.
The cause yknowe, and of his harm the rote,
Anon he gave to the sike man his bote.
Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries
To send him dragges, and his lettuaries,
For echo of hem made other for to winne:
Hir frendship n'as not newe to beginne.
Wel knew he the old Esculapius,
And Dioscorides, and eke Rufus;
Old Hippocras, Hali, and Gallien;
Serapion, Rasis, and Avicen;
Averrois, Damascene, and Constantin;
Bernard, and Gatisden, and Gilbertin.
Of his diete mesurable was he,
For it was of no superfluitee,
But of gret nourishing, and digestible.
His studie was but litel on the Bible.
In sanguin and in perse he clad was alle
Lined with taffata, and with sendalle.
And yet he was but esy of dispence:
He kepte that he wan in the pestilence.
For gold in phisike is a cordial;
Therfore he loved gold in special.

A good Wif was ther of beside Bathe,
But she was som del defe, and that was scathe.
Of cloth making she hadde swiche an haunt,
She passed hem of Ipres, and of Gaunt.
In all the parish wif ne was ther non,
That to the offring before hire shulde gon,
And if ther did, certain so wroth was she,
That she was out of alle charitee.
Hire coverchiefs weren ful fine of ground;
I dorste swere, they weyeden a pound;
That on the Sonday were upon hire hede.
Hire hosen weren of fine scarlet rede,
Ful streite yteyed, and shoon ful moist and new
Bold was hire face, and fayre and rede of hew.
She was a worthy woman all hire live,
Housbondes at the chirche dore had she had five
Withouten other compagnie in youthe.
But therof nedeth not to speke as nouthe.
And thries hadde she ben at Jerusaleme.
She hadde passed many a strange streme.
At Rome she hadde ben, and at Boloine,
In Galice at Seint James, and at Coloine.
She coude moche of wandring by the way.
Gat-tothed was she, sothly for to say.
Upon an ambler esily she sat,
Ywimpled wel, and on hire hede an hat,
As brode as is a bokeler, or a targe.
A fote-mantel about hire hippes large,
And on hire fete a pair of sporres sharpe.
In felawship wel coude she laughe and carpe
Of remedies of love she knew perchance,
For of that arte she coude the olde dance.

A good man ther was of religioun,
That was a poure Persone of a toun:
But riche he was of holy thought and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche.
His parishens devoutly wolde he teche.
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversite ful patient:
And swiche he was ypreved often sithes.
Ful loth were him to cursen for his tithes,
But rather wolde he yeven out of doute,
Unto his poure parishens aboute,
Of his offring, and eke of his substance.
He coude in litel thing have suffisance.
Wide was his parish, and houses fer asonder,
But he ne left nought for no rain ne thonder,
In sikenesse and in mischief to visite
The ferrest in his parish, moche and lite,
Upon his fete, and in his hand a staf.

ensample to his shepe he yaf,
e wrought, and afterward he taught.
gospel he the wordes caught,
ure he added yet therto,
l ruste, what shuld iren do?
est be foule, on whom we trust,
is a lewed man to rust:
it is, if that a preest take kepe,
itten shepherd, and clene shepe:
a preest ensample for to yeve,
enesse, how his shepe shulde live.
not his benefice to hire,
is shepe acombred in the mire,
to London, unto Seint Poules,
m a chanterie for soules,
rotherhede to be withold:
t home, and kepte wel his fold,
wolf ne made it not miscarie.
iepherd, and no mercenarie.
he holy were, and vertuous,
inful men not dispitous,
peche dangerous ne digne,
eching discrete and benigne.
folk to heven, with fairenesse,
sample, was his besinesse:
any persone obstinat,
were of highe, or low estat,
he snibben sharply for the nones.
eest I trowe that nowher non is.
after no pompe ne reverence,
im no spiced conscience,
lore, and his apostles twelve,
but first he folwed it himselve.

ther was a PLOWMAN, was his brother,
ylaid of dong ful many a fother.
inker, and a good was he,
ees, and parfite charitee.
e beste with alle his herte
s, were it gain or smerte,
is neighebour right as himselve.
iresh, and therto dike, and delve,
sake, for every poure wight,
hire, if it lay in his might.
s paied he ful fayre and wel
propre swinke, and his catel.
he rode upon a mere.
also a reve, and a millere,
r, and a pardoner also,
, and myself, ther n'ere no mo.

LER was a stout carl for the nones,
e was of braun, and eke of bones;
d wel, for over all ther he came,
g he wold bere away the ram.
rt shuldered brode, a thikke gnarre,
o dore, that he n'olde heve of barre,
at a renning with his hede.
any sowe or fox was rede,
brode, as though it were a spade.
op right of his nose he hade
d theron stode a tufte of heres,
bristles of a sowes eres.
irles blacke were and wide.
d bokeler bare he by his side.
as wide was as a forneis.
angler, and a goliardeis,
as most of sinne, and harlotries.
he stelen corne, and tollen thries.
had a thomb of gold parde.

A white cote and a blew hode wered he.
A baggepipe wel coude he blowe and soune,
And therwithall he brought us out of toune.

A gentil MANCIPLE was ther of a temple,
Of which achatours mighten take ensemple
For to ben wise in bying of vitaille.
For whether that he paide, or toke by taille,
Algate he waited so in his achate,
That he was ay before in good estate.
Now is not that of God a ful fayre grace,
That swiche a lewed mannes wit shal pace
The wisdom of an hepe of lered men?
Of maisters had he mo than thries ten,
That were of lawe expert and curious:
Of which ther was a dosein in that hous,
Worthy to ben stewardes of rent and lond
Of any lord that is in Englelond,
To maken him live by his propre good,
In honour detteles, but if he were wood,
Or live as scarsly, as him list desire;
And able for to helpen all a shire
In any cas that mighte fallen or happe;
And yet this manciple sette hir aller cappe.

The REVE was a slendre colerike man,
His berd was shave as neighe as ever he can.
His here was by his eres round yshorne.
His top was docked like a preest beforne.
Ful longe were his legges, and ful lene,
Ylike a staff, ther was no calf ysene.
Wel coude he kepe a garner and a binne:
Ther was non auditour coude on him winne.
Wel wiste he by the drought, and by the rain,
The yelding of his seed, and of his grain.
His lordes shepe, his nete, and his deirie,
His swine, his hors, his store, and his pultrie,
Were holly in this reves governing,
And by his covenant yave he rekening,
Sin that his lord was twenty yere of age;
Ther coude no man bring him in arerage.
Ther n'as baillif, ne herde, ne other hine,
That he ne knew his sleight and his covine:
They were adradde of him, as of the deth.
His wonning was ful fayre upon an heth,
With grene trees yshadewed was his place.
He coude better than his lord pourchace.
Ful riche he was ystored privily.
His lord wel coude he plesen subtilly,
To yeve and lene him of his owen good,
And have a thank, and yet a cote and hood.
In youthe he lerned hadde a good mistere.
He was a wel good wright, a carpentere.
This reve sate upon a right good stot,
That was all pomelee grey, and highte Scot.
A long surcote of perse upon he hade,
And by his side he bare a rusty blade.
Of Norfolk was this reve, of which I tell,
Beside a toun, men clepen Baldeswell.
Tucked he was, as is a frere, aboute,
And ever he rode the hinderest of the route.
A SOMPNOUR was ther with us in that place,
That hadde a fire-red cherubinnes face,
For sauseflemne he was, with eyen narwe.
As hote he was, and likerous as a sparwe,
With scalled browes blake, and pilled berd:
Of his visage children were sore aferd.
Ther n'as quiksilver, litarge, ne brimston,
Boras, ceruse, ne oile of tartre non,
Ne oinement that wolde clense or bite,

That him might helpen of his whelkes white,
Ne of the knobbes sitting on his chekes.
Wel loved he garlike, onions, and lekes,
And for to drinke strong win as rede as blood.
Than wolde he speke, and crie as he were wood.
And whan that he wel dronken had the win,
Than wold he speken no word but Latin.
A fewe termes coude he, two or three,
That he had lerned out of som decree;
No wonder is, he herd it all the day.
And eke ye knowen wel, how that a jay
Can clepen watte, as wel as can the pope.
But who so wolde in other thing him grope,
Than hadde he spent all his philosophie,
Ay, *Questio quid juris*, wolde he crie.
He was a gentil harlot and a kind;
A better felaw shulde a man not find.
He wolde suffre for a quart of wine,
A good felaw to have his concubine
A twelve month, and excuse him at the full.
Ful prively a finch eke coude he pull.
And if he found owhere a good felawe,
He wolde techen him to have non awe
In swiche a cas of the archedekenes curse;
But if a mannes soule were in his purse;
For in his purse he shulde ypunished be.
Purse is the archedekens helle, said he.
But wel I wote, he lied right in dede:
Of cursing ought eche gilty man him drede.
For curse wol sle right as assoiling saveth,
And also ware him of a *significavit*.
In danger hadde he at his owen gise
The yonge girles of the diocise,
And knew hir conseil, and was of hir rede.
A gerlond hadde he sette upon his hede,
As gret as it were for an alestake:
A bokeler hadde he made him of a cake.

With him ther rode a gentil PARDONERE
Of Rouncevall, his frend and his compere,
That streit was comen from the court of Rome.
Ful loude he sang, Come hither, love, to me.
This sompnour bare to him a stiff burdoun,
Was never trompe of half so gret a soun.
This pardoner had here as yelwe as wax,
But smoth it heng, as doth a strike of flax:
By unces heng his lokkes that he hadde,
And therwith he his shulders overspradde.
Ful thinne it lay, by culpons on and on,
But hode, for jolite, ne wered he non,
For it was trussed up in his wallet.
Him thought he rode al of the newe get,
Dishevele, sauf his cappe, he rode all bare.
Swiche glaring eyen hadde he, as an hare.
A vernicle hadde he sewed upon his cappe.
His wallet lay beforne him in his lappe,
Bret-ful of pardon come from Rome al hote.
A vois he hadde, as smale as hath a gote.
No berd hadde he, ne never non shulde have,
As smothe it was as it were newe shave;
I trowe he were a gelding or a mare.
But of his craft, fro Berwike unto Ware,
Ne was ther swiche an other pardonere.
For in his male he hadde a pilwebere,
Which, as he saide, was oure ladies veil:
He saide, he hadde a gobbet of the seyl
Thatte seint Peter had, whan that he went
Upon the see, till Jesu Crist him hent.
He had a crois of laton ful of stones,
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones.
But with these relikes, whanne that he fond
A poure persone dwelling up on lond,
Upon a day he gat him more moneie
Than that the persone gat in monethes tweie.
And thus with fained flattering and japes,
He made the persone, and the peple, his apes.
But trewely to tellen atte last,
He was in chirche a noble ecclesiast.
Wel coude he rede a lesson or a storie,
But alderbest he sang an offertorie:
For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe,
He muste preche, and wel afile his tonge,
To winne silver, as he right wel coude:
Therfore he sang the merier and loude.

Now have I told you shortly in a clause,
Th' estat, th' araie, the nombre, and eke the cause
Why that assembled was this compagnie
In Southwerk at this gentil hostelrie,
That highte the Tabard, faste by the Belle.
But now is time to you for to telle,
How that we baren us that ilke night,
Whan we were in that hostelrie alight.
And after wol I telle of our viage,
And all the remenant of our pilgrimage.
But firste I praie you of your curtesie,
That ye ne arette it not my vilanie,
Though that I plainly speke in this matere,
To tellen you hir wordes and hir chere;
Ne though I speke hir wordes proprely.
For this ye knowen al so wel as I,
Who so shall telle a tale after a man,
He moste reherse, as neighe as ever he can,
Everich word, if it be in his charge,
All speke he never so rudely and so large;
Or elles he moste tellen his tale untrewe,
Or feinen thinges, or finden wordes newe.
He may not spare, although he were his brother.
He moste as wel sayn o word, as an other.
Crist spake himself ful brode in holy writ,
And wel ye wote no vilanie is it.
Eke Plato sayeth, who so can him rede,
The wordes moste ben cosin to the dede.
Also I praie you to forgive it me,
All have I not sette folk in hir degree,
Here in this tale, as that they shulden stonde.
My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.

Gret chere made oure hoste us everich on,
And to the souper sette he us anon:
And served us with vitaille of the beste.
Strong was the win, and wel to drinke us leste.
A semely man our hoste was with alle
For to han ben a marshal in an halle.
A large man he was with eyen stepe,
A fairer burgeis is ther non in Chepe:
Bold of his speche, and wise and wel ytaught,
And of manhood him lacked righte naught.
Eke therto was he right a mery man,
And after souper plaien he began,
And spake of mirthe amonges other thinges,
Whan that we hadden made our rekeninges;
And saide thus; Now, lordinges, trewely
Ye ben to me welcome right hertily:
For by my trouthe, if that I shal not lie,
I saw nat this yere swiche a compagnie
At ones in this herberwe, as is now.
Fayn wolde I do you mirthe, and I wiste how.
And of a mirthe I am right now bethought,
To don you ese, and it shall coste you nought.

o Canterbury ; God you spede,
ul martyr quite you your mede ;
I wot, as ye gon by the way,
:n you to talken and to play :
ely comfort ne mirthe is non,
by the way dombe as the ston :
fore wold I maken you disport,
erst, and don you some comfort.
ıu liketh alle by on assent
:o stonden at my jugement :
:o werchen as I shal you say
e, whan ye riden on the way,
ny faders soule that is ded,
: mery, smiteth of my hed.
your hondes withouten more speche.
nseil was not longe for to seche :
ht it was not worth to make it wise,
ıted him withouten more avise,
him say his verdit, as him leste.
ges, (quod he) now herkeneth for the beste;
it nat, I pray you, in disdain ;
ıe point, to speke it plat and plain,
: of you to shorten with youre way,
age, shal tellen tales tway,
rbury ward, I mene it so,
eward he shall tellen other two,
ıres that whilom han befalle.
:h of you that bereth him best of alle,
ı sayn, that telleth in this cas
best sentence and most solas,
ı a souper at youre aller cost
his place sitting by this post,
ıt ye comen agen from Canterbury.
o maken you the more mery,
selven gladly with you ride,
min owen cost, and be your gide.
that wol my jugement withsay,
for alle we spenden by the way.
ı vouchesauf that it be so,
anon withouten wordes mo,
l erly shapen me therfore.
ing was granted, and our othes swore
glad herte, and praiden him also,
ʼold vouchesauf for to don so,
he wolde ben our governour,
And of our tales juge and reportour,
And sette a souper at a certain pris ;
And we wol reuled ben at his devise,
In highe and lowe : and thus by on assent,
We ben accorded to his jugement.
And therupon the win was fette anon.
We dronken, and to reste wenten eche on,
Withouten any lenger tarying.
A-morwe whan the day began to spring,
Up rose our hoste, and was our aller cok,
And gaderd us togeder in a flok,
And forth we riden a litel more than pas,
Unto the watering of Seint Thomas :
And ther our hoste began his hors arest,
And saide ; lordes, herkeneth if you lest.
Ye wete your forword, and I it record.
If even-song and morwe-song accord,
Let se now who shal telle the first tale.
As ever mote I drinken win or ale,
Who so is rebel to my jugement,
Shal pay for alle that by the way is spent.
Now draweth cutte, or that ye forther twinne.
He which that hath the shortest shal beginne.
Sire knight, (quod he) my maister and my lord,
Now draweth cutte, for that is min accord.
Cometh nere, (quod he) my lady prioresse,
And ye, sire clerk, let be your shamefastnesse,
Ne studieth nought ; lay hand to, every man.
Anon to drawen every wight began,
And shortly for to tellen as it was,
Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas,
The sothe is this, the cutte felle on the knight,
Of which ful blith and glad was every wight ;
And tell he must his tale as was reson,
But forword, and by composition,
As ye han herd ; what nedeth wordes mo ?
And whan this good man saw that it was so,
As he that wise was and obedient
To kepe his forword by his free assent,
He saide ; sithen I shal begin this game,
What ? welcome be the cutte a goddes name.
Now let us ride, and herkeneth what I say.
And with that word we riden forth our way ;
And he began with right a mery chere
His tale anon, and saide as ye shul here.

THE KNIGHTES TALE.

as olde stories tellen us,
a duk that highte Theseus.
es he was lord and governour,
s time swiche a conquerour,
er was ther non under the sonne.
a riche contree had he wonne.
h his wisdom and his chevalrie,
erd all the regne of Feminie,
om was ycleped Scythia ;
led the fresshe quene Ipolita,
ght hire home with him to his contree
:hel glorie and gret solempnitee,
ıire yonge suster Emelie.
with victorie and with melodie
ı worthy duk to Athenes ride,
is host, in armes him beside.
rtes, if it n'ere to long to here,
I wolde have told you fully the manere,
How wonnen was the regne of Feminie,
By Theseus, and by his chevalrie ;
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Betwix Athenes and the Amasones ;
And how asseged was Ipolita
The faire hardy quene of Scythia ;
And of the feste, that was at hire wedding,
And of the temple at hire home coming.
But all this thing I moste as now forbere.
I have, God wot, a large feld to ere ;
And weke ben the oxen in my plow.
The remenant of my tale is long ynow.
I wil not letten eke non of this route.
Let every felaw telle his tale aboute,
And let se now who shal the souper winne
Ther as I left, I wil agen beginne.

This duk, of whom I made mentioun,
Whan he was comen almost to the toun,
In all his wele and in his moste pride,
He was ware, as he cast his eye aside,
Wher that ther kneled in the highe wey
A compagnie of ladies, tweyand twey,
Eche after other, clad in clothes blake:
But swiche a crie and swiche a wo they make,
That in this world n'is creature living,
That ever herd swiche another waimenting.
And of this crie ne wolde they never stenten,
Till they the reines of his bridel henten.
What folk be ye that at min home coming
Perturben so my feste with crying?
Quod Theseus; have ye so grete envie
Of min honour, that thus complaine and crie?
Or who hath you misboden, or offended?
Do telle me, if that it may be amended;
And why ye be thus clothed alle in blake?
The oldest lady of hem all than spake,
Whan she had swouned, with a dedly chere,
That it was reuthe for to seen and here.
She sayde; lord, to whom fortune hath yeven
Victorie, and as a conquerour to liven,
Nought greveth us your glorie and your honour;
But we beseke you of mercie and socour.
Have mercie on our woe and our distresse.
Som drope of pitee, thurgh thy gentillesse,
Upon us wretched wimmen let now falle.
For certes, lord, ther n'is non of us alle,
That she n'hath ben a duchesse or a quene
Now be we caitives, as it is wel sene:
Thanked be fortune, and hire false whele,
That non estat ensureth to be wele.
And certes, lord, to abiden your presence
Here in this temple of the goddesse Clemence
We han ben waiting all this fourtenight:
Now helpe us, lord, sin it lieth in thy might.
I wretched wight, that wepe and waile thus,
Was whilom wif to king Capaneus,
That starfe at Thebes, cursed be that day:
And alle we that ben in this aray,
And maken all this lamentation,
We losten alle our husbondes at that toun,
While that the sege therabouten lay.
And yet now the olde Creon, wala wa!
That lord is now of Thebes the citee,
Fulfilled of ire and of iniquitee,
He for despit, and for his tyrannie,
To don the ded bodies a vilanie,
Of alle our lordes, which that ben yslawe,
Hath alle the bodies on an hepe ydrawe,
And will not suffren hem by non assent
Neyther to ben yberied, ne ybrent,
But maketh houndes ete hem in despite.
And with that word, withouten more respite
They fallen groff, and crien pitously;
Have on us wretched wimmen som mercy,
And let our sorwe sinken in thin herte.
This gentil duk doun from his courser sterte
With herte pitous, whan he herd hem speke.
Him thoughte that his herte wolde all to-breke,
Whan he saw hem so pitous and so mate,
That whilom weren of so gret estate.
And in his armes he hem all up hente,
And hem comforted in ful good entente,
And swore his oth, as he was trewe knight,
He wolde don so ferforthly his might
Upon the tyrant Creon hem to wreke,
That all the peple of Grece shulde speke,
How Creon was of Theseus yserved,
As he that hath his deth ful wel deserved.
And right anon withouten more abode
His banner he displaide, and forth he rode
To Thebes ward, and all his host beside:
No nere Athenes n'olde he go ne ride,
Ne take his ese fully half a day,
But onward on his way that night he lay:
And sent anon Ipolita the quene,
And Emelie hire yonge sister shene
Unto the toun of Athenes for to dwell:
And forth he rit; ther n'is no more to tell.
The red statue of Mars with spere and targe
So shineth in his white banner large,
That all the feldes gliteren up and doun:
And by his banner borne is his penon
Of gold ful riche, in which ther was ybete
The Minotaure which that he slew in Crete.
Thus rit this duk, thus rit this conquerour,
And in his host of chevalrie the flour,
Til that he came to Thebes, and alight
Fayre in a feld, ther as he thought to fight.
But shortly for to speken of this thing,
With Creon, which that was of Thebes king,
He fought, and slew him manly as a knight
In plaine bataille, and put his folk to flight:
And by assaut he wan the citee after,
And rent adoun bothe wall and sparre, and rafter;
And to the ladies he restored again
The bodies of hir housbondes that were slain,
To don the obsequies, as was tho the gise.
But it were all to long for to devise
The grete clamour, and the waimenting,
Whiche that the ladies made at the brenning
Of the bodies, and the gret honour,
That Theseus the noble conquerour
Doth to the ladies, whan they from him wente:
But shortly for to telle is min entente.
Whan that this worthy duk, this Theseus,
Hath Creon slaine, and wonnen Thebes thus,
Still in the feld he toke all night his reste,
And did with all the contree as him leste.
To ransake in the tas of bodies dede,
Hem for to stripe of harneis and of wede,
The pillours dide hir besinesse and cure,
After the bataille and discomfiture.
And so befell, that in the tas they found,
Thurgh girt with many a grevous blody wound,
Two yonge knightes ligging by and by,
Bothe in on armes, wrought ful richely:
Of whiche two, Arcita highte that on,
And he that other highte Palamon.
Not fully quik, ne fully ded they were,
But by hir cote-armure, and by hir gere,
The heraudes knew hem wel in special,
As tho that weren of the blod real
Of Thebes, and of sustren two yborne.
Out of the tas the pillours han hem torne,
And han hem caried soft unto the tente
Of Theseus, and he ful sone hem sente
To Athenes, for to dwellen in prison
Perpetuel, he n'olde no raunson.
And whan this worthy duk had thus ydon,
He toke his host, and home he rit anon
With laurer crouned as a conquerour;
And ther he liveth in joye and in honour
Terme of his lif; what nedeth wordes mo?
And in a tour, in anguish and in wo,
Dwellen this Palamon and eke Arcite,
For evermo, ther may no gold hem quite.

asseth yere by yere, and day by day,
e ones in a morwe of May
elie, that fayrer was to sene
ie lilie upon his stalke grene,
her than the May with floures newe,
. the rose colour strof hire hewe;
ich was the finer of hem two)
day, as she was wont to do,
risen, and all redy dight.
wol have no slogardie a-night.
priketh every gentil herte,
eth him out of his slepe to sterte,
, arise, and do thin observance.
aketh Emelie han remembrance
onour to May, and for to rise.
was she fresshe for to devise.
e here was broided in a tresse,
re back, a yerde long I gesse.
e gardin at the sonne uprist
th up and doun wher as hire list.
reth floures, partie white and red,
a sotel gerlond for hire hed,
angel hevenlich she song.
tour, that was so thikke and strong,
the castel was the chef dongeon,
these knightes weren in prison,
I tolde you, and tellen shal)
joinant to the gardin wall,
is Emelie had hire playing.
was the sonne, and clere that morwening,
mon, this woful prisoner,
s wone, by leve of his gayler
, and romed in a chambre on high,
he all the noble citee sigh,
he gardin, ful of branches grene,
his fresshe Emelia the shene
re walk, and romed up and doun.
rweful prisoner, this Palamon
is chambre roming to and fro,
mselfe complaining of his wo:
as borne, ful oft he sayd, alas!
befell, by aventure or cas,
gh a window thikke of many a barre
ret, and square as any sparre,
is eyen upon Emelia,
withal he blent and cried, a!
he stongen were unto the herte.
th that crie Arcite anon up sterte,
, cosin min, what eyleth thee,
so pale and dedly for to see?
est thou? who hath thee don offence?
s love, take all in patience
n, for it may non other be.
ath yeven us this adversite.
e aspect or disposition
e, by som constellation,
en us this, although we had it sworn,
the heven whan that we were born,
endure: this is the short and plain.
lamon answerde, and sayde again;
soth of this opinion
t a vaine imagination.
n caused me not for to crie.
s hurt right now thurghout min eye
herte, that wol my bane be.
esse of a lady that I se
he gardin roming to and fro,
f all my crying and my wo.
e'r she be woman or goddesse.
is is it, sothly, as I gesse.

And therwithall on knees adoun he fill,
And sayde: Venus, if it be your will
You in this gardin thus to transfigure,
Beforn me sorweful wretched creature,
Out of this prison helpe that we may scape.
And if so be our destinee be shape
By eterne word to dien in prison,
Of our lignage have som compassion,
That is so low ybrought by tyrannie.
And with that word Arcita gan espie
Wher as this lady romed to and fro.
And with that sight hire beautee hurt him so,
That if that Palamon were wounded sore,
Arcite is hurt as moche as he, or more.
And with a sigh he sayde pitously:
The fresshe beautee sleth me sodenly
Of hire that rometh in the yonder place.
And but I have hire mercie and hire grace,
That I may seen hire at the leste way,
I n'am but ded; ther n'is no more to say.
This Palamon, whan he these wordes herd,
Dispitously he loked, and answerd:
Whether sayest thou this in ernest or in play?
Nay, quod Arcite, in ernest by my fay.
God helpe me so, me lust full yvel pley.
This Palamon gan knit his browes twey.
It were, quod he, to thee no gret honour
For to be false, ne for to be traytour
To me, that am thy cosin and thy brother
Ysworne ful depe, and eche of us to other,
That never for to dien in the peine,
Til that the deth departen shal us tweine,
Neyther of us in love to hindre other,
Ne in non other cas, my leve brother;
But that thou shuldest trewely forther me
In every cas, as I shuld forther thee.
This was thin oth, and min also certain;
I wot it wel, thou darst it not withsain.
Thus art thou of my conseil out of doute.
And now thou woldest falsly ben aboute
To love my lady, whom I love and serve,
And ever shal, til that min herte sterve.
Now certes, false Arcite, thou shalt not so.
I loved hire firste, and tolde thee my wo
As to my conseil, and my brother sworne
To forther me, as I have told beforne.
For which thou art ybounden as a knight
To helpen me, if it lie in thy might,
Or elles art thou false, I dare wel sain.
This Arcita full proudly spake again.
Thou shalt, quod he, be rather false than I.
And thou art false, I tell thee utterly.
For *par amour* I loved hire first or thou.
What wolt thou sayn? thou wisted nat right now
Whether she were a woman or a goddesse.
Thin is affection of holinesse,
And min is love, as to a creature:
For which I tolde thee min aventure
As to my cosin, and my brother sworne.
I pose, that thou lovedest hire beforne:
Wost thou not wel the olde clerkes sawe,
That who shall give a lover any lawe?
Love is a greter lawe by my pan,
Then may be yeven of any erthly man:
And therfore positif lawe, and swiche decree
Is broken all day for love in eche degree.
A man moste nedes love maugre his hed.
He may not fleen it, though he shuld be ded,
All be she maid, or widewe, or elles wif.
And eke it is not likely all thy lif

To stonden in hire grace, no more shal I:
For wel thou wost thyselven veraily,
That thou and I be damned to prison
Perpetuel, us gaineth no raunson.
We strive, as did the houndes for the bone,
They fought all day, and yet hir part was none.
Ther came a kyte, while that they were so wrothe,
And bare away the bone betwix hem bothe.
And therfore at the kinges court, my brother,
Eche man for himself, ther is non other.
Love if thee lust; for I love and ay shal:
And sothly, leve brother, this is al.
Here in this prison mosten we endure,
And everich of us take his aventure.
Gret was the strif, and long betwix hem twey,
If that I hadde leiser for to sey:
But to th' effect. It happed on a day,
(To tell it you as shortly as I may)
A worthy duk that highte Perithous,
That felaw was to this duk Theseus
Sin thilke day that they were children lite,
Was come to Athenes, his felaw to visite,
And for to play, as he was wont to do,
For in this world he loved no man so:
And he loved him as tendrely again.
So wel they loved, as olde bokes sain,
That whan that on was ded, sothly to telle,
His felaw wente and sought him doun in helle:
But of that storie list me not to write.
Duk Perithous loved wel Arcite,
And had him knowe at Thebes yere by yere:
And finally at request and praiere
Of Perithous, withouten any raunson
Duk Theseus him let out of prison,
Frely to gon, wher that him list over all,
In swiche a gise, as I you tellen shall.
This was the forword, plainly for to endite,
Betwixen Theseus and him Arcite:
That if so were, that Arcite were yfound
Ever in his lif, by day or night, o stound
In any contree of this Theseus,
And he were caught, it was accorded thus,
That with a swerd he shulde lese his hed;
Ther was non other remedie ne rede.
But taketh his leve, and homeward he him spedde;
Let him beware, his nekke lieth to wedde.
How gret a sorwe suffereth now Arcite!
The deth he feleth thurgh his herte smite;
He wepeth, waileth, crieth pitously;
To sleen himself he waiteth prively.
He said; Alas the day that I was borne!
Now is my prison werse than beforne:
Now is me shape eternally to dwelle
Not only in purgatorie, but in helle.
Alas! that ever I knew Perithous.
For elles had I dwelt with Theseus
Yfetered in his prison evermo.
Than had I ben in blisse, and not in wo.
Only the sight of hire, whom that I serve,
Though that I never hire grace may deserve,
Wold have sufficed right ynough for me.
O dere cosin Palamon, quod he,
Thin is the victorie of this aventure.
Ful blisful in prison maiest thou endure:
In prison? certes nay, but in paradise.
Wel hath fortune yturned thee the dise,
That hast the sight of hire, and I th' absence.
For possible is, sin thou hast hire presence,
And art a knight, a worthy and an able,
That by som cas, sin fortune is changeable,
Thou maiest to thy desir som time atteine.
But I that am exiled, and barreine
Of alle grace, and in so gret despaire,
That ther n'is erthe, water, fire, ne aire,
Ne creature, that of hem maked is,
That may me hele, or don comfort in this,
Wel ought I sterve in wanhope and distresse.
Farewel my lif, my lust, and my gladnesse.
Alas, why plainen men so in commune
Of purveyance of God, or of fortune,
That yeveth hem ful oft in many a gise
Wel better than they can hemself devise?
Som man desireth for to have richesse,
That cause is of his murdre or gret siknesse.
And som man wold out of his prison fayn,
That in his house is of his meinie slain.
Infinite harmes ben in this matere.
We wote not what thing that we praien here.
We faren as he that dronke is as a mous.
A dronken man wot wel he hath an hous,
But he ne wot which is the right way thider,
And to a dronken man the way is slider.
And certes in this world so faren we.
We seken fast after felicite,
But we go wrong ful often trewely.
Thus we may sayen alle, and namely I,
That wende, and had a gret opinion,
That if I might escapen fro prison
Than had I ben in joye and parfite hele,
Ther now I am exiled fro my wele.
Sin that I may not seen you, Emelie,
I n'am but ded; ther n'is no remedie.
Upon that other side Palamon,
Whan that he wist Arcita was agon,
Swiche sorwe he maketh, that the grete tour
Resouned of his yelling and clamour.
The pure fetters on his shinnes grete
Were of his bitter salte teres wete.
Alas! quod he, Arcita cosin min,
Of all our strif, God wot, the frute is thin.
Thou walkest now in Thebes at thy large,
And of my wo thou yevest litel charge.
Thou maist, sith thou hast wisdom and manhede,
Assemblen all the folk of our kinrede,
And make a werre so sharpe on this contree,
That by som aventure, or som tretee,
Thou maist have hire to lady and to wif,
For whom that I must nedes lese my lif.
For as by way of possibilitee,
Sith thou art at thy large of prison free,
And art a lord, gret is thin avantage,
More than is min, that sterve here in a cage.
For I may wepe and waile, while that I live,
With all the wo that prison may me yeve,
And eke with peine that love me yeveth also,
That doubleth all my tourment and my wo.
Therwith the fire of jalousie up sterte
Within his brest, and hent him by the herte
So woodly, that he like was to behold
The box-tree, or the ashen ded and cold.
Than said he; O cruel goddes, that governe
This world with binding of your word eterne,
And writen in the table of athamant
Your parlement and your eterne grant,
What is mankind more unto you yhold
Than is the shepe, that rouketh in the fold?
For slain is man, right as another beest,
And dwelleth eke in prison, and arrest,
And hath siknesse, and gret adversite,
And oftentimes gilteles parde.

t governance is in this prescience,
lteles turmenteth innocence?
t encreseth this all my penance,
an is bounden to his observance
ddes sake to leten of his will,
s a beest may all his lust fulfill.
ıan a beest is ded, he hath no peine;
.n after his deth mote wepe and pleine,
ı in this world he have care and wo:
ıten doute it maye stonden so.
answer of this lete I to divines,
l I wote, that in this world gret pine is.
I see a serpent or a thefe,
ıany a trewe man hath do meschefe,
his large, and wher him lust may turn.
noste ben in prison thurgh Saturn,
:e thurgh Juno, jalous and eke wood,
ath wel neye destruied all the blood
bes, with his waste walles wide.
enus sleeth me on that other side
ousie, and fere of him Arcite.
wol I stent of Palamon a lite,
ten him in his prison still dwelle,
Arcita forth I wol you telle.
sommer passeth, and the nightes long
en double wise the peines strong
f the lover, and of the prisoner.
which hath the wofuller mistere.
ortly for to say, this Palamon
uelly is damned to prison,
nes and in fetters to ben ded;
rcite is exiled on his hed
ermore as out of that contree,
er more he shal his lady see.
lovers axe I now this question,
ath the werse, Arcite or Palamon?
n may se his lady day by day,
prison moste he dwellen alway.
ther wher him lust may ride or go,
ı his lady shal he never mo.
:meth as you liste, ye that can,
wol tell you forth as I began.
.n that Arcite to Thebes comen was,
a day he swelt and said alas,
ı his lady shal he never mo.
ıortly to concluden all his wo,
:hel sorwe hadde never creature,
or shal be, while the world may dure.
pe, his mete, his drinke is him byraft,
:ne he wex, and drie as is a shaft.
en holwe, and grisly to behold,
we falwe, and pale as ashen cold,
ıditary he was, and ever alone,
ailing all the night, making his mone.
he herde song or instrument,
wold he wepe, he mighte not be stent.
e were his spirites, and so low,
ıanged so, that no man coude know
eche ne his vois, though men it herd.
ı his gere, for all the world he ferd
t only like the lovers maladie
:os, but rather ylike manie,
dred of humours melancolike,
:e his hed in his celle fantastike.
ıortly turned was all up so doun
ıabit and eke dispositioun
ı, this woful lover, dan Arcite.
shuld I all day of his wo endite?
ın he endured had a yere or two
ruel torment, and this peine and wo,
At Thebes, in his contree, as I said,
Upon a night in slepe as he him laid,
Him thought how that the winged god Mercury
Beforne him stood, and bad him to be mery.
His slepy yerde in hond he bare upright;
An hat he wered upon his heres bright.
Arraied was this god (as he toke kepe)
As he was whan that Argus toke his slepe;
And said him thus: To Athenes shalt thou wende
Ther is thee shapen of thy wo an ende.
And with that word Arcite awoke and stert.
Now trewely how sore that ever me smert,
Quod he, to Athenes right now wol I fare.
Ne for no drede of deth shal I not spare
To se my lady, that I love and serve;
In hire presence I rekke not to sterve.
And with that word he caught a gret mirrour,
And saw that changed was all his colour,
And saw his visage all in another kind.
And right anon it ran him in his mind,
That sith his face was so disfigured
Of maladie the which he had endured,
He mighte wel, if that he bare him lowe,
Live in Athenes evermore unknowe,
And sen his lady wel nigh day by day.
And right anon he changed his aray,
And clad him as a poure labourer.
And all alone, save only a squier,
That knew his privitee and all his cas,
Which was disguised pourely as he was,
To Athenes is he gon the nexte way.
And to the court he went upon a day,
And at the gate he proffered his service,
To drugge and draw, what so men wold devise.
And shortly of this matere for to sayn,
He fell in office with a chamberlain,
The which that dwelling was with Emelie.
For he was wise, and coude sone espie
Of every servant, which that served hire.
Wel coude he hewen wood, and water bere,
For he was yonge and mighty for the nones,
And therto he was strong and big of bones
To don that any wight can him devise.
A yere or two he was in this service,
Page of the chambre of Emelie the bright;
And Philostrate he sayde that he hight.
But half so wel beloved a man as he,
Ne was ther never in court of his degre.
He was so gentil of conditioun,
That thurghout all the court was his renoun.
They sayden that it were a charite
That Theseus wold enhaunsen his degre,
And putten him in worshipful service,
Ther as he might his vertues exercise.
And thus within a while his name is sprongo
Both of his dedes, and of his good tonge,
That Theseus hath taken him of ner
That of his chambre he made him a squier,
And gave him gold to mainteine his degre;
And eke men brought him out of his contre
Fro yere to yere ful prively his rent.
But honestly and sleighly he it spent,
That no man wondred how that he it hadde.
And thre yere in this wise his lif he ladde,
And bare him so in pees an eke in werre,
Ther n'as no man that Theseus hath derre.
And in this blisse let I now Arcite,
And speke I wol of Palamon a lite.
In derkenesse and horrible and strong prison
This seven yere hath sitten Palamon,

Forpined, what for love and for distresse.
Who feleth double sorwe and hevinesse
But Palamon? that love distraineth so,
That wood out of his wit he goth for wo,
And eke therto he is a prisonere
Perpetuell, not only for a yere.
Who coude rime in English proprely
His martirdom? forsoth it am not I,
Therfore I passe as lightly as I may.
It fell that in the seventh yere in May
The thridde night, (as olde bokes sayn,
That all this storie tellen more plain)
Were it by aventure or destinee,
(As, whan a thing is shapen, it shal be,)
That sone after the midnight, Palamon
By helping of a frend brake his prison,
And fleeth the cite faste as he may go,
For he had yeven drinke his gayler so
Of a clarre, made of a certain wine,
With Narcotikes and Opie of Thebes fine,
That all the night though that men wold him shake,
The gailer slept, he mighte not awake.
And thus he fleeth as faste as ever he may.
The night was short, and faste by the day,
That nedes cost he moste himselven hide.
And to a grove faste ther beside
With dredful foot than stalketh Palamon.
For shortly this was his opinion,
That in that grove he wold him hide all day,
And in the night than wold he take his way
To Thebes ward, his frendes for to preie
On Theseus to helpen him werreie.
And shortly, eyther he wold lese his lif,
Or winnen Emelie unto his wif.
This is the effect, and his entente plein.
Now wol I turnen to Arcite agein,
That litel wist how neighe was his care,
Til that fortune had brought him in the snare.
The besy larke, the messager of day,
Salewith in hire song the morwe gray;
And firy Phebus riseth up so bright,
That all the orient laugheth of the sight,
And with his stremes drieth in the greves
The silver dropes, hanging on the leves,
And Arcite, that is in the court real
With Theseus the squier principal,
Is risen, and loketh on the mery day.
And for to don his observance to May,
Remembring on the point of his desire,
He on his courser, sterting as the fire,
Is ridden to the feldes him to pley,
Out of the court, were it a mile or twey.
And to the grove of which that I you told,
By aventure his way he gan to hold,
To maken him a gerlond of the greves,
Were it of woodbind or of hauthorn leves,
And loud he song agen the sonne shene.
O Maye, with all thy floures and thy grene,
Right welcome be thou faire freshe May,
I hope that I some grene here getten may.
And from his courser, with a lusty herte
Into the grove ful hastily he sterte,
And in a path he romed up and doun,
Ther as by aventure this Palamon
Was in a bush, that no man might him se,
For sore afered of his deth was he.
Nothing ne knew he that it was Arcite.
God wot he wold have trowed it ful lite.
But soth is said, gon sithen are many yeres,
That feld hath eyen, and the wood hath eres.
It is ful faire a man to bere him even,
For al day meten men at unset steven.
Ful litel wote Arcite of his felaw,
That was so neigh to herken of his saw,
For in the bush he sitteth now ful still.
Whan that Arcite had romed all his fill,
And songen all the roundel lustily,
Into a studie he fell sodenly,
As don these lovers in hir queinte gores,
Now in the crop, and now doun in the breres,
Now up, now doun, as boket in a well.
Right as the Friday, sothly for to tell,
Now shineth it, and now it raineth fast,
Right so can gery Venus overcast
The hertes of hire folk, right as hire day
Is gerfull, right so changeth she aray.
Selde is the Friday all the weke ylike.
Whan Arcite had ysonge, he gan to sike,
And set him doun withouten any more:
Alas! (quod he) the day that I was bore!
How longe, Juno, thurgh thy crueltee
Wilt thou werreien Thebes the citee?
Alas! ybrought is to confusion
The blood real of Cadme and Amphion:
Of Cadmus, which that was the firste man,
That Thebes built, or firste the toun began,
And of the citee firste was crouned king.
Of his linage am I, and his ofspring
By veray line, as of the stok real:
And now I am so caitif and so thral,
That he that is my mortal enemy,
I serve him as his squier pourely.
And yet doth Juno me wel more shame,
For I dare not beknowe min owen name,
But ther as I was wont to highte Arcite,
Now highte I Philostrat, not worth a mite
Alas! thou fell Mars, alas! thou Juno,
Thus hath your ire our linage all fordo,
Save only me, and wretched Palamon,
That Theseus martireth in prison.
And over all this, to slen me utterly,
Love hath his firy dart so brenningly
Ystiked thurgh my trewe careful hert,
That shapen was my deth erst than my shert.
Ye slen me with your eyen, Emelie;
Ye ben the cause wherfore that I die.
Of all the remenant of min other care
Ne set I not the mountance of a tare,
So that I coud don ought to your plesance.
And with that word he fell doun in a trance
A longe time; and afterward up sterte
This Palamon, that thought thurghout his herte
He felt a colde swerd sodenly glide:
For ire he quoke, no lenger wolde he hide.
And whan that he had herd Arcites tale,
As he were wood, with face ded and pale,
He sterte him up out of the bushes thikke,
And sayde: False Arcite, false traitour wicke,
Now art thou hent, that lovest my lady so,
For whom that I have all this peine and wo,
And art my blood, and to my conseil sworn,
As I ful oft have told thee herebeforn,
And hast bejaped here duk Theseus,
And falsely changed hast thy name thus;
I wol be ded, or elles thou shalt die.
Thou shalt not love my lady Emelie,
But I wol love hire only and no mo.
For I am Palamon thy mortal fo.
And though that I no wepen have in this place,
But out of prison am astert by grace,

nought, that eyther thou shalt die,
ne shalt nat loven Emelie.
hich thou wo.t, for thou shalt not asterte.
ircite tho, with ful dispitous herte,
e him knew, and had his tale herd,
is a leon, pulled out a swerd,
de thus ; By God that sitteth above,
that thou art sike, and wood for love,
that thou no wepen hast in this place,
ldest never out of this grove pace,
u ne shuldest dien of min hond.
fie the suretee and the bond,
hat thou saist that I have made to thee.
veray fool, thinke wel that love is free,
ol love hire maugre all thy might.
thou art a worthy gentil knight,
iest to darraine hire by bataille,
re my trouth, to-morwe I will not faille,
en weting of any other wight,
e I wol be founden as a knight,
igen harneis right ynough for thee;
se the beste, and leve the werste for me.
e and drinke this night wol I bring
for thee, and clothes for thy bedding.
) be that thou my lady win,
me in this wode, ther I am in,
ist wel have thy lady as for me.
'alamon answerd, I grant it thee.
s they ben departed til a-morwe,
he of hem hath laid his faith to borwe.
ide, out of alle charitee!
that wolt no felaw have with thee!
is sayde, that love ne lordship
his thankes, have no felawship.
en that Arcite and Palamon.
is ridden anon unto the toun,
he morwe, or it were day light,
ely two harneis hath he dight,
fisant and mete to darreine
ille in the feld betwix hem tweine.
is hors, alone as he was borne,
th all this harneis him beforne;
he grove, at time and place ysette,
ite and this Palamon ben mette.
igen gan the colour of hir face.
the hunter in the regne of Trace
ndeth at a gappe with a spere,
inted is the lion or the bere,
eth him come rushing in the greves,
king bothe the boughes and the leves,
iketh, here cometh my mortal enemy,
ten faille, he must be ded or I;
er I mote slen him at the gappe;
ote slen me, if that me mishappe:
n they, in changing of hir hewe,
s eyther of hem ever knewe.
s no good day, ne no saluing.
it withouten wordes rehersing,
of hem halpe to armen other,
ly, as he were his owen brother.
r that, with sharpe speres strong
neden eche at other wonder long.
ghtest wenen, that this Palamon
ghting were as a wood leon,
cruel tigre was Arcite:
bores gan they togeder smite,
then white as fome for ire wood.
e ancle foughte they in hir blood.
his wise I let hem fighting dwelle,
h I wol of Theseus you telle.

The destinee, ministre general,
That executeth in the world over al
The purveiance, that God hath sen beforne;
So strong it is, that though the world had sworne
The contrary of a thing by ya or nay,
Yet somtime it shall fallen on a day
That falleth nat efte in a thousand yere.
For certainly our appetites here,
Be it of werre, or pees, or hate, or love,
All is this ruled by the sight above.
This mene I now by mighty Theseus,
That for to hunten is so desirous,
And namely at the grete hart in May,
That in his bed ther daweth him no day,
That he n'is clad, and redy for to ride
With hunte and horne, and houndes him beside.
For in his hunting hath he swiche delite,
That it is all his joye and appetite
To ben himself the grete hartes bane,
For after Mars he serveth now Diane.
Clere was the day, as I have told or this,
And Theseus, with alle joye and blis,
With his Ipolita, the fayre quene,
And Emelie, yclothed all in grene,
On hunting ben they ridden really.
And to the grove, that stood ther faste by,
In which ther was an hart as men him told,
Duk Theseus the streite way hath hold.
And to the launde he rideth him ful right,
Ther was the hart ywont to have his flight,
And over a brooke, and so forth on his wey.
This duk wol have a cours at him or twey
With houndes, swiche as him lust to commaunde.
And when this duk was comen to the launde,
Under the sonne he loked, and anon
He was ware of Arcite and Palamon,
That foughten breme, as it were bolles two.
The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro
So hidously, that with the leste stroke
It semed that it wolde felle an oke.
But what they weren, nothing he no wote.
This duk his courser with his sporres smote,
And at a stert he was betwix hem two,
And pulled out a swerd and cried, ho!
No more, up peine of lesing of your hed.
By mighty Mars, he shal anon be ded,
That smiteth any stroke, that I may sen.
But telleth me what mistere men ye ben,
That ben so hardy for to fighten here
Withouten any juge other officere,
As though it were in listes really.
This Palamon answered hastily,
And saide: Sire, what nedeth wordes mo?
We have the deth deserved bothe two.
Two woful wretches ben we, two caitives,
That ben accombred of our owen lives,
And as thou art a rightful lord and juge,
Ne yeve us neyther mercie ne refuge.
And sle me first, for seinte charitee.
But sle my felaw eke as wel as me.
Or sle him first; for, though thou know it lite
This is thy mortal fo, this is Arcite,
That fro thy lond is banished on his hed,
For which he hath deserved to be ded.
For this is he that came unto thy gate
And sayde, that he highte Philostrate.
Thus hath he japed thee ful many a yere,
And thou hast maked him thy chief squiere,
And this is he, that loveth Emelie.
For sith the day is come that I shal die

I make plainly my confession,
That I am thilke woful Palamon,
That hath thy prison broken wilfully.
I am thy mortal fo, and it am I
That loveth so hot Emelie the bright,
That I wold dien present in hire sight.
Therfore I axe deth and my jewise.
But sle my felaw in the same wise,
For both we have deserved to be slain.
This worthy duk answerd anon again,
And sayd, This is a short conclusion,
Your owen mouth, by your confession
Hath damned you, and I wol it recorde.
It nedeth not to peine you with the corde.
Ye shul be ded by mighty Mars the rede.
The quene anon for veray womanhede
Gan for to wepe, and so did Emelie,
And all the ladies in the compagnie.
Gret pite was it, as it thought hem alle,
That ever swiche a chance shulde befalle.
For gentil men they were of gret estat,
And nothing but for love was this debat.
And sawe hir blody woundes wide and sore;
And alle criden bothe lesse and more,
Have mercie, Lord, upon us wimmen alle.
And on hir bare knees adoun they falle,
And wold have kist his feet ther as he stood,
Till at the last, aslaked was his mood;
(For pitee renneth sone in gentil herte)
And though he first for ire quoke and sterte,
He hath considered shortly in a clause
The trespas of hem both, and eke the cause:
And although that his ire hir gilt accused,
Yet in his reson he hem both excused;
As thus; he thoughte wel that every man
Wol helpe himself in love if that he can,
And eke deliver himself out of prison.
And eke his herte had compassion
Of wimmen, for they wepten ever in on:
And in his gentil herte he thoughte anon,
And soft unto himself he sayed: fie
Upon a lord that wol have no mercie,
But be a leon both in word and dede,
To hem that ben in repentance and drede,
As wel as to a proud dispitous man,
That wol mainteinen that he first began.
That lord hath litel of discretion,
That in swhiche cas can no division:
But weigheth pride and humblesse after on.
And shortly, whan his ire is thus agon,
He gan to loken up with eyen light,
And spake these same wordes all on hight.
The god of love, a! *benedicite*,
How mighty and how grete a lord is he?
Again his might ther gainen non obstacles,
He may be cleped a God for his miracles.
For he can maken at his owen gise
Of everich herte, as that him list devise.
Lo here this Arcite, and this Palamon,
That quitely weren out of my prison,
And might have lived in Thebes really,
And weten I am hir mortal enemy,
And that hir deth lith in my might also,
And yet hath love, maugre hir eyen two,
Ybrought hem hither bothe for to die.
Now loketh, is not this an heigh folie?
Who maye ben a fool, but if he love?
Behold for Goddes sake that sitteth above,
Se how they blede! be they not wel araied?
Thus hath hir lord, the god of love, hem paied
Hir wages, and hir fees for hir service.
And yet they wenen for to be ful wise,
That serven love, for ought that may befalle.
And yet is this the beste game of alle,
That she, for whom they have this jolite,
Con hem therfore as mochel thank as me.
She wot no more of alle this hote fare
By God, than wot a cuckow or an hare.
But all mote ben assaied hote or cold;
A man mote ben a fool other yonge or old;
I wot it by myself ful yore agon:
For in my time a servant was I on.
And therfore sith I know of loves peine,
And wot how sore it can a man destreine,
As he that oft hath ben caught in his las,
I you foryeve all holly this trespas,
At request of the quene that kneleth here,
And eke of Emelie, my suster dere.
And ye shul bothe anon unto me swere,
That never mo ye shul my contree dere,
Ne maken werre upon me night ne day,
But ben my frendes in alle that ye may.
I you foryeve this trespas every del.
And they him sware his axing fayr and wel,
And him of lordship and of mercie praid,
And he hem granted grace, and thus he said:
To speke of real linage and richesse,
Though that she were a quene or a princesse,
Eche of you bothe is worthy douteles
To wedden whan time is, but natheles
I speke as for my suster Emelie,
For whom ye have this strif and jalousie,
Ye wot yourself, she may not wedden two
At ones, though ye fighten evermo:
But on of you, al be him loth or lefe,
He mot gon pipen in an ivy lefe:
This is to say, she may not have you bothe,
Al be ye never so jalous, ne so wrothe.
And forthy I you put in this degree,
That eche of you shall have his destinee,
As him is shape, and herkneth in what wise;
Lo here your ende of that I shal devise.
My will is this for plat conclusion
Withouten any replication,
If that you liketh, take it for the beste,
That everich of you shal gon wher him leste
Freely withouten raunson or dangere;
And this day fifty wekes, ferre ne nere,
Everich of you shal bring an hundred knightes,
Armed for listes up at alle rightes
Alle redy to darrein hire by bataille.
And this behete I you withouten faille
Upon my trouth, and as I am a knight,
That whether of you bothe hath that might,
This is to sayn, that whether he or thou
May with his hundred, as I spake of now,
Sle his contrary, or out of listes drive,
Him shall I yeven Emelie to wive,
To whom that fortune yeveth so fayr a grace.
The listes shal I maken in this place,
And God so wisly on my soule rewe,
As I shal even juge ben, and trewe.
Ye shal non other ende with me maken
That on of you ne shal be ded or taken.
And if you thinketh this is wel ysaid,
Saith your avis, and holdeth you apaid.
This is your ende, and your conclusion.
Who loketh lightly now but Palamon?
Who springeth up for joye but Arcite?
Who coud it tell, or who coud it endite,

› that is maked in the place
'heseus hath don so fayre a grace!
n on knees went every manere wight,
nked him with all hir hertes might,
nely these Thebanes often sith.
hus with good hope and with herte blith
ken hir leve, and homeward gan they ride
›es, with his olde walles wide.
ve men wolde deme it negligence,
yete to tellen the dispence
seus, that goth so besily
en up the listes really,
iche a noble theatre as it was,
vel sayn, in all this world ther n'as.
cuite a mile was aboute,
of stone, and diched all withoute.
was the shape, in manere of a compas
legrees, the hight of sixty pas,
ıan a man was set on o degree
d not his felaw for to see.
l ther stood a gate of marbel white,
rd right swiche another in th' opposite.
›rtly to concluden, swiche a place
ver in erthe, in so litel a space,
he lond ther n'as no craftes man,
ometrie, or arsmetrike can,
reiour, ne kerver of images,
ıeseus ne yaf him mete and wages
atre for to maken and devise.
for to don his rite and sacrifice,
ard hath upon the gate above,
hip of Venus goddesse of love,
ıke an auter and an oratorie;
stward in the minde and in memorie
s he maked hath right swiche another,
ste largely of gold a fother.
rthward, in a touret on the wall,
astre white and red corall
torie riche for to see,
hip of Diane of chastitee,
heseus don wrought in noble wise.
et had I foryetten to devise
ole kerving, and the portreitures,
ıpe, the contenance of the figures
eren in these oratories three.
in the temple of Venus maist thou see
ht on the wall, ful pitous to beholde,
›ken slepes, and the sikes colde,
red teres, and the waimentinges,
y strokes of the desiringes,
ves servants in this lif enduren;
ıes, that hir covenants assuren.
e and hope, desire, foolhardinesse,
and youthe, baudrie and richesse,
es and force, lesinges and flaterie,
ce, besinesse, and jalousie,
ered of yelwe goldes a gerlond,
ıdde a cuckow sitting or hire hond,
instruments, and caroles and dances,
ıd array, and all the circumstances
, which that I reken and reken shall,
re weren peinted on the wall,
o than I can make of mention.
hly all the mount of Citheron,
enus hath hire principal dwelling,
ıewed on the wall in purtreying,
ll the gardin, and the lustinesse.
t was foryetten the porter idelnesse,
rcissus the fayre of yore agon,
the folie of king Salomon,
Ne yet the grete strengthe of Hercules,
Th' enchantment of Medea and Circes,
Ne of Turnus the hardy fiers corage,
The riche Cresus caitif in servage.
Thus may ye seen, that wisdom ne richesse,
Beaute ne sleighte, strengthe ne hardinesse,
Ne may with Venus holden champartie,
For as hire liste the world may she gie.
Lo, all these folk so caught were in hire las
Til they for wo ful often said alas.
Sufficeth here ensamples on or two,
And yet I coude reken a thousand mo.
The statue of Venus glorious for to see
Was naked fleting in the large see,
And fro the navel doun all covered was
With wawes grene, and bright as any glas.
A citole in hire right hand hadde she,
And on hire hed, ful semely for to see,
A rose gerlond fressh, and wel smelling,
Above hire hed hire doves fleckering.
Before hire stood hire sone Cupido,
Upon his shoulders winges had he two;
And blind he was, as it is often sene;
A bow he bare and arwes bright and kene.
Why shulde I not as wel eke tell you all
The purtreiture, that was upon the wall
Within the temple of mighty Mars the rede?
All peinted was the wall in length and brede
Like to the estres of the grisly place,
That highte the gret temple of Mars in Trace,
In thilke colde and frosty region,
Ther as Mars hath his sovereine mansion.
First on the wall was peinted a forest,
In which ther wonneth neyther man ne best,
With knotty knarry barrein trees old
Of stubbes sharpe and hidous to behold;
In which ther ran a romble and a swough,
As though a storme shuld bresten every bough
And downward from an hill under a bent,
Ther stood the temple of Mars armipotent,
Wrought all of burned stele, of which th' entree
Was longe and streite, and gastly for to see.
And therout came a rage and swiche a vise,
That it made all the gates for to rise.
The northern light in at the dore shone,
For window on the wall ne was ther none,
Thurgh which men mighten any light discerne.
The dore was all of athamant eterne,
Yclenched overthwart and endelong
With yren tough, and for to make it strong,
Every piler the temple to sustene
Was tonne-gret, of yren bright and shene.
Ther saw I first the derke imagining
Of felonie, and alle the compassing;
The cruel ire, red as any glede,
The pikepurse, and eke the pale drede;
The smiler with the knif under the cloke,
The shepen brenning with the blake smoke;
The treson of the mordring in the bedde,
The open werre, with woundes all bebledde;
Conteke with blody knif, and sharp manace.
All full of chirking was that sory place.
The sleer of himself yet saw I there,
His herte-blood hath bathed all his here:
The naile ydriven in the shode on hight,
The colde deth, with mouth gaping upright.
Amiddes of the temple sate mischance,
With discomfort and sory contenance.
Yet saw I woodnesse laughing in his rage,
Armed complaint, outhees, and fiers outrage;

The carraine in the bush, with throte ycorven,
A thousand slain, and not of qualme ystorven;
The tirant, with the prey by force yraft;
The toun destroied, ther was nothing laft.
Yet saw I brent the shippes hoppesteres,
The hunte ystrangled with the wilde beres:
The sow freting the child right in the cradel;
The coke yscalled, for all his long ladel.
Nought was foryete by th' infortune of Marte
The carter overridden with his carte;
Under the wheel ful low he lay adoun.
Ther were also of Martes division,
Th' armerer, and the bowyer, and the smith,
That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his stith.
And all above depeinted in a tour
Saw I conquest, sitting in gret honour,
With thilke sharpe swerd over his hed
Yhanging by a subtil twined thred.
Depeinted was the slaughter of Julius,
Of gret Nero, and of Antonius:
All be that thilke time they were unborne,
Yet was hir deth depeinted therbeforne,
By manacing of Mars, right by figure,
So was it shewed in that purtreiture
As is depeinted in the cercles above,
Who shal be slaine or elles ded for love.
Sufficeth on ensample in stories olde,
I may not reken hem alle, though I wolde.
The statue of Mars upon a carte stood
Armed, and loked grim as he were wood,
And over his hed ther shinen two figures
Of sterres, that ben cleped in scriptures,
That on Puella, that other Rubeus.
This god of armes was araied thus:
A wolf ther stood beforne him at his fete
With eyen red, and of a man he ete:
With subtil pensil peinted was this storie,
In redouting of Mars and of his glorie.
Now to the temple of Diane the chaste
As shortly as I can I wol me haste,
To tellen you of the descriptioun,
Depeinted by the walles up and doun,
Of hunting and of shamefast chastitee.
Ther saw I how woful Calistope,
Whan that Diane agreved was with here,
Was turned from a woman til a bere,
And after was she made the lodesterre:
Thus was it peinted, I can say no ferre;
Hire sone is eke a sterre as men may see.
Ther saw I Dane yturned til a tree,
I mene not hire the goddesse Diane,
But Peneus daughter, which that highte Dane.
Ther saw I Atteon an hart ymaked,
For vengeance that he saw Diane all naked:
I saw how that his houndes have him caught,
And freten him, for that they knew him naught.
Yet peinted was a litel forthermore,
How Athalante hunted the wilde bore,
And Meleagre, and many another mo,
For which Diane wroughte hem care and wo.
Ther saw I many another wonder storie,
The which me liste not drawen to memorie.
This goddesse on an hart ful heye sete,
With smale houndes all aboute hire fete,
And undernethe hire feet she hadde a mone,
Wexing it was, and shulde wanen sone.
In gaudy grene hire statue clothed was,
With bow in hond, and arwes in a cas.
Hire eyen caste she ful low adoun,
Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.

A woman travailling was hire beforne,
But for hire childe so longe was unborne
Ful pitously Lucina gan she call,
And sayed; helpe, for thou mayst beste of all.
Wel coude he peinten lifly that it wrought,
With many a florein he the hewes bought.
Now ben these listes made, and Theseus
That at his grete cost arraied thus
The temples, and the theatre everidel,
Whan it was don, him liked wonder wel.
But stint I wol of Theseus a lite,
And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.
The day approcheth of hir returning,
That everich shuld an hundred knightes bring,
The bataille to darreine, as I you told;
And til Athenes, hir covenant for to hold,
Hath everich of hem brought an hundred knightes
Wel armed for the werre at alle rightes.
And sikerly ther trowed many a man,
That never, sithen that the world began,
As for to speke of knighthood of hir hond,
As fer as God hath maked see and lond,
N'as, of so fewe, so noble a compagnie.
For every wight that loved chevalrie,
And wold, his thankes, han a passant name,
Hath praied, that he might ben of that game,
And wel was him, that therto chosen was.
For if ther fell to-morwe swiche a cas,
Ye knowen wel, that every lusty knight,
That loveth *par amour*, and hath his might,
Were it in Englelond, or elleswher,
They wold, hir thankes, willen to be ther.
To fight for a lady, a! *benedicite*,
It were a lusty sighte for to se.
And right so ferden they with Palamon.
With him ther wenten knightes many on.
Som wol ben armed in an habergeon,
And in a brest plate, and in a gipon;
And som wol have a pair of plates large;
And som wol have a Pruce sheld, or a targe;
Som wol ben armed on his legges wele,
And have an axe, and som a mace of stele.
Ther n'is no newe guise, that it n'as old.
Armed they weren, as I have you told,
Everich after his opinion.
Ther maist thou se coming with Palamon
Licurge himself, the grete king of Trace:
Blake was his berd, and manly was his face.
The cercles of his eyen in his hed
They gloweden betwixen yelwe and red,
And like a griffon loked he about,
With kemped heres on his browes stout;
His limmes gret, his braunes hard and stronge,
His shouldres brode, his armes round and longe.
And as the guise was in his contree,
Ful highe upon a char of gold stood he,
With foure white bolles in the trais.
Instede of cote-armure on his harnais,
With nayles yelwe, and bright as any gold,
He hadde a beres skin, cole-blake for old.
His longe here was kempt behind his bak,
As any ravenes fether it shone for blake.
A wreth of gold arm-gret, of huge weight,
Upon his hed sate ful of stones bright,
Of fine rubins and of diamants.
About his char ther wenten white alauns,
Twenty and mo, as gret as any stere,
To hunten at the leon or the dere,
And folwed him, with mosel fast ybound,
Colered with gold, and torettes filed round.

l lordes had he in his route
wel, with hertes sterne and stoute.
cita, in stories as men find,
netrius the king of Inde,
le bay, trapped in stele,
h cloth of gold diapred wele,
; like the god of armes Mars.
mure was of a cloth of Tars,
th perles, white, and round and grete.
as of brent gold new ybete ;
upon his shouldres hanging
rubies red, as fire sparkling.
ere like ringes was yronne,
as yelwe, and glitered as the sonne.
is high, his eyen bright citrin,
ound, his colour was sanguin,
nes in his face yspreint,
elwe and blake somdel ymeint,
on he his loking caste.
twenty yere his age I caste.
is wel begonnen for to spring ;
s as a trompe thondering.
d he wered of laurer grene
resshe and lusty for to sene.
nd he bare for his deduit
e, as any lily whit.
l lordes had he with him there,
ave hir hedes in all hir gere,
in alle manere thinges.
wel, that erles, dukes, kinges
red in this noble compagnie,
d for encrese of chevalrie.
king ther ran on every part
tame leon and leopart.
is wise, these lordes all and some
Sonday to the citee come
ime, and in the toun alight.
seus, this duk, this worthy knight,
d brought hem into his citee,
em, everich at his degree,
em, and doth so gret labour
n, and don hem all honour,
n wenen that no mannes wit
t ne coud amenden it.
lcie, the service at the feste,
eftes to the most and leste,
rray of Theseus paleis,
first ne last upon the deis,
fayrest ben or best dancing,
hem can carole best or sing,
st felingly speketh of love ;
s sitten on the perche above,
des liggen on the floor adoun,
ow make I no mentioun ;
ffect ; that thinketh me the beste ;
the point, and herkeneth if you leste.
ay night, or day began to spring,
mon the larke herde sing,
n'ere not day by houres two,
e larke, and Palamon right tho
erte, and with an high corage
wenden on his pilgrimage
sful Citherea benigne,
us, honourable and digne.
houre, he walketh forth a pas
tes, ther hire temple was,
e kneleth, and with humble chere
ore, he sayde as ye shul here.
f fayre, o lady min Venus,
Jove, and spouse of Vulcanus,
Thou glader of the mount of Citheron,
For thilke love thou haddest to Adon
Have pitee on my bitter teres smert,
And take myn humble praier at thin herte.
Alas ! I ne have no langage to tell
The effecte, ne the torment of min hell ;
Min herte may min harmes not bewrey ;
I am so confuse, that I cannot say.
But mercy, lady bright, that knowest wele
My thought, and seest what harmes that I fele,
Consider all this, and rue upon my sore,
As wisly as I shall for evermore,
Emforth my might, thy trewe servant be,
And holden werre alway with chastite :
That make I min avow, so ye me helpe.
I kepe nought of armes for to yelpe,
Ne axe I nat to-morwe to have victorie,
Ne renoun in this cas, ne vaine glorie
Of pris of armes, blowen up and doun,
But I wold have fully possessioun
Of Emelie, and die in hire servise ;
Find thou the manere how, and in what wise.
I rekke not, but it may better be,
To have victorie of hem, or they of me,
So that I have my lady in min armes.
For though so be that Mars is god of armes,
Your vertue is so grete in heven above,
That if you liste, I shal wel have my love.
Thy temple wol I worship evermo,
And on thin auter, wher I ride or go,
I wol don sacrifice, and fires bete.
And if ye wol not so, my lady swete,
Than pray I you, to-morwe with a spere
That Arcita me thurgh the herte bere.
Than rekke I not, whan I have lost my lif,
Though that Arcita win hire to his wif.
This is the effecte and ende of my praiere ;
Yeve me my love, thou blisful lady dere.
Whan the orison was don of Palamon,
His sacrifice he did, and that anon,
Full pitously, with alle circumstances,
All tell I not as now his observances.
But at the last the statue of Venus shoke,
And made a signe, wherby that he toke,
That his praiere accepted was that day.
For though the signe shewed a delay,
Yet wist he wel that granted was his bone ;
And with glad herte he went him home ful sone.
The thridde houre inequal that Palamon
Began to Venus temple for to gon,
Up rose the sonne, and up rose Emelie,
And to the temple of Diane gan hie.
Hire maydens, that she thider with hire ladde,
Ful redily with hem the fire they hadde,
Th' encense, the clothes, and the remenant all,
That to the sacrifice longen shall.
The hornes ful of mede, as was the gise,
Ther lakked nought to don hire sacrifise.
Smoking the temple, ful of clothes fayre,
This Emelie with herte debonaire
Hire body wesshe with water of a well.
But how she did hire rite I dare not tell ;
But it be any thing in general ;
And yet it were a game to heren all ;
To him that meneth wel it n'ere no charge
But it is good a man to ben at large.
Hire bright here kembed was, untressed all.
A coroune of a grene oke cerial
Upon hire hed was set ful fayre and mete.
Two fires on the auter gan she bete,

And did hire tninges, as men may behold
In Stace of Thebes, and these bokes old.
Whan kindled was the fire, with pitous chere
Unto Diane she spake, as ye may here.
O chaste goddesse of the wodes grene,
To whom both heven and erthe and see is sene,
Queue of the regne of Pluto, derke and lowe,
Goddesse of maydens, that min herte hast knowe
Ful many a yere, and wost what I desire,
As kepe me fro thy vengeance and thin ire,
That Atteon aboughte cruelly:
Chaste goddesse, wel wotest thou that I
Desire to ben a mayden all my lif,
Ne never wol I be no love ne wif.
I am (thou wost) yet of thy compagnie,
A mayde, and love hunting and venerie,
And for to walken in the wodes wilde,
And not to ben a wif, and be with childe.
Nought wol I knowen compagnie of man.
Now helpe me, lady, sith ye may and can,
For tho three formes that thou hast in thee.
And Palamon, that hath swiche love to me,
And eke Arcite, that loveth me so sore,
This grace I praie thee withouten more,
As sende love and pees betwix hem two:
And fro me torne away hir hertes so,
That all hir hote love, and hir desire,
And all hir besy torment, and hir fire
Be queinte, or torned in another place.
And if so be thou wolt not do me grace,
Or if my destinee be shapen so,
That I shall nedes have on of hem two,
As sende me him that most desireth me.
Behold, goddesse of clene chastite,
The bitter teres, that on my chekes fall.
Sin thou art mayde, and keper of us all,
My maydenhed thou kepe and wel conserve,
And while I live, a mayde I wol thee serve.
The fires brenne upon the auter clere,
While Emelie was thus in hire praiere:
But sodenly she saw a sighte queinte.
For right anon on of the fires queinte,
And quiked again, and after that anon
That other fire was queinte, and all agon:
And as it queinte, it made a whisteling,
As don these brondes wet in hir brenning.
And at the brondes ende outran anon
As it were blody dropes many on:
For which so sore agast was Emelie,
That she was wel neigh mad, and gan to crie,
For she ne wiste what it signified;
But only for the fere thus she cried,
And wept, that it was pitee for to here.
And therwithall Diane gan appere
With bowe in hond, right as an hunteresse
And sayde; doughter, stint thin hevinesse.
Among the goddes highe it is affermed,
And by eterne word written and confermed,
Thou shalt be wedded unto on of tho,
That han for thee so mochel care and wo:
But unto which of hem I may not tell.
Farewel, for here I may no longer dwell.
The fires which that on min auter brenne,
Shal thee declaren er that thou go henne,
Thin aventure of love, as in this cas.
And with that word, the arwes in the cas
Of the goddesse clattereu fast and ring,
And forth she went, and made a vanishing,
For which this Emelie astonied was,
And sayde; what amounteth this, alas!
I putte me in thy protection,
Diane, and in thy disposition.
And home she goth anon the nexte way.
This is the effecte, ther n'is no more to say.
The nexte houre of Mars folwing this
Arcite unto the temple walked is
Of fierce Mars, to don his sacrifise
With all the rites of his payen wise.
With pitous herte and high devotion,
Right thus to Mars he sayde his orison.
O stronge god, that in the regnes cold
Of Trace honoured art, and lord yhold,
And hast in every regne and every lond
Of armes all the bridel in thin hond,
And hem fortunest as thee list devise,
Accept of me my pitous sacrifise.
If so be that my youthe may deserve,
And that my might be worthy for to serve
Thy godhed, that I may ben on of tame,
Than praie I thee to rewe upon my pine,
For thilke peine, and thilke hote fire,
In which thou whilom brendest for desire
Whanne that thou usedest the beautee
Of fayre yonge Venus, freshe and free,
And haddest hire in armes at thy wille:
Although thee ones on a time misfille,
Whan Vulcanus had caught thee in his las,
And fond the ligging by his wif, alas!
For thilke sorwe that was tho in thin herte,
Have reuthe as wel upon my peines smerte.
I am yonge and unkonning, as thou wost,
And, as I trow, with love offended most,
That ever was ony lives creature:
For she, that doth me all this wo endure,
Ne recceth never, whether I sinke or flete.
And wel I wot, or she me mercy hete,
I moste with strengthe win hire in the place:
And wel I wot, withouten helpe or grace
Of thee, ne may my strengthe not availle:
Than helpe me, lord, to-morwe in my bataille,
For thilke fire that whilom brenned thee,
As wel as that this fire now brenneth me;
And do, that I to-morwe may han victorie.
Min be the travaille, and thin be the glorie.
Thy soveraine temple wol I most honouren
Of ony place, and alway most labouren
In thy plesance and in thy craftes strong.
And in thy temple I wol my baner hong,
And all the armes of my compagnie,
And evermore, until that day I die,
Eterne fire I wol beforne thee finde,
And eke to this avow I wol me binde.
My berd, my here that hangeth long adoun,
That never yet felt non offension
Of rasour ne of shere, I wol thee yeve,
And ben thy trewe servant while I live.
Now, lord, have reuthe upon my sorwes sore,
Yeve me the victorie, I axe thee no more.
The praier stint of Arcita the stronge,
The ringes on the temple dore that honge,
And eke the dores clattereden ful faste,
Of which Arcita somwhat him agaste.
The fires brent upon the auter bright,
That it gan all the temple for to light;
A swete smell anon the ground up yaf,
And Arcita anon his hond up haf,
And more encense into the fire he cast,
With other rites mo, and at the last
The statue of Mars began his hauberke ring;
And with that soun he herd a murmuring

ınd dim, that sayde thus, Victorie.
h he yaf to Mars honour and glorie.
ıus with joye, and hope wel to fare,
on unto his inne is fare,
ıs foul is of the brighte sonne.
ght anon swiche strif ther is begonne
e granting, in the heven above,
ı Venus the goddesse of love,
s the sterne god armipotent,
iter was besy it to stent:
he paie Saturnus the colde,
w so many of aventures olde,
ıis olde experience and art,
ul sone hath plesed every part.
is sayd, elde hath gret avantage,
ı bothe wisdom and usage:
the old out-renne, but not out-rede.
e anon, to stenten strif and drede,
hat it is again his kind,
s strif he gan a remedy find.
e doughter Venus, quod Saturne,
ı, that hath so wide for to turne,
re power than wot any man.
e drenching in the see so wan,
e prison in the derke cote,
e strangel and hanging by the throte,
nure, and the cherles rebelling,
ning, and the prive empoysoning.
eance and pleine correction,
lwell in the signe of the leon.
e ruine of the highe halles,
g of the toures and of the walles
minour, or the carpenter:
mpson in shaking the piler.
also the maladies colde,
e tresons, and the castes olde:
; is the fader of pestilence.
e no more, I shal do diligence,
ımon, that is thin owen knight,
his lady, as thou hast him hight.
ars shal help his knight yet natheles.
you ther mot somtime be pees:
not of o complexion,
ieth all day swiche division.
ayel, redy at thy will;
w no more, I shal thy lust fulfill.
ol I stenten of the goddes above,
and of Venus goddesse of love,
n you as plainly as I can
effect, for which that I began.
as the feste in Athenes thilke day,
the lusty seson of that May
ry wight to ben in swiche plesance,
hat monday justen they and dance,
den it in Venus highe servise.
e cause that they shulden rise
orwe for to seen the fight,
reste wenten they at night.
ıe morwe whan the day gan spring,
nd harneis noise and clattering
in the hostelries all aboute:
ıe paleis rode ther many a route
, upon stedes and palfreis.
ıayst thou see devising of harneis
th and so riche, and wrought so wele
ıithry, of brouding, and of stele;
ıes brighte, testeres, and trappures;
en helmes, hauberkes, cote-armures;
parementes on hir courseres,
of retenue, and eke squieres,
Nailing the speres, and helmes bokeling,
Gniding of sheldes, with lainers lacing;
Ther as nede is, they weren nothing idel:
The fomy stedes on the golden bridel
Gnawing, and fast the armureres also
With file and hammer priking to and fro;
Yemen on foot, and communes many on
With shorte staves, thicke as they may gon;
Pipes, trompes, nakeres, and clariounes,
That in the bataille blowen blody sounes;
The paleis ful of peple up and doun,
Here three, ther ten, holding hir questioun,
Devining of these Theban knightes two.
Som sayden thus, som sayde it shal be so;
Som helden with him with the blacke berd,
Som with the balled, som with the thick herd;
Som saide he loked grim, and wolde fighte:
He hath a sparth of twenty pound of wighte.
Thus was the halle full of devining
Long after that the sonne gan up spring.
The gret Theseus that of his slepe is waked
With minstralcie and noise that was maked,
Held yet the chambre of his paleis riche,
Til that the Theban knightes bothe yliche
Honoured were, and to the paleis fette.
Duk Theseus is at a window sette,
Araied right as he were a god in trone:
The peple preseth thiderward ful sone
Him for to seen, and don high reverence,
And eke to herken his heste and his sentence.
An heraud on a scaffold made an o,
Til that the noise of the peple was ydo:
And whan he saw the peple of noise al still,
Thus shewed he the mighty dukes will.
The lord hath of his high discretion
Considered, that it were destruction
To gentil blood, to fighten in the giso
Of mortal bataille now in this emprise:
Wherfore to shapen that they shul not die,
He wol his firste purpos modifie.
No man therfore, up peine of losse of lif,
No maner shot, ne pollax, ne short knif
Into the listes send, or thider bring.
Ne short swerd for to stike with point biting
No man ne draw, ne bere it by his side.
Ne no man shal unto his felaw ride
But o cours, with a sharpe ygrounden spere:
Foin if him list on foot, himself to were.
And he that is at meschief, shal be take,
And not slaine, but be brought unto the stake,
That shal ben ordeined on eyther side,
Thider he shal by force, and ther abide.
And if so fall, the chevetain be take
On eyther side, or elles sleth his make,
No longer shal the tourneying ylast.
God spede you; goth forth and lay on fast.
With longe swerd and with mace fighteth your fill.
Goth now your way; this is the lordes will.
The vois of the peple touched to the heven,
So loude crieden they with mery steven:
God save swiche a lord that is so good,
He wilneth no destruction of blood.
Up gon the trompes and the melodie,
And to the listes rit the compagnie
By ordinance, thurghout the cite large,
Hanged with cloth of gold, and not with sarge.
Ful like a lord this noble duk gan ride,
And these two Thebans upon eyther side:
And after rode the quene and Emelie,
And after that another compagnie

Of on and other, after hir degree.
And thus they passen thurghout the citee,
And to the listes comen they be time:
It n'as not of the day yet fully prime.
Whan set was Theseus ful rich and hie,
Ipolita the quene, and Emelie,
And other ladies in degrees aboute,
Unto the setes preseth all the route.
And westward, thurgh the gates under Mart,
Arcite, and eke the hundred of his part,
With baner red, is entred right anon;
And in the selve moment Palamon
Is, under Venus, estward in the place,
With baner white, and hardy chere and face.
In all the world, to seken up and doun,
So even without variatioun
Ther n'ere swiche compagnies never twey.
For ther was non so wise that coude sey,
That any hadde of other avantage
Of worthinesse, ne of estat, ne age,
So even were they chosen for to gesse.
And in two renges fayre they hem dresse.
Whan that hir names red were everich on,
That in hir nombre gile were ther non,
Tho were the gates shette, and cried was loude;
Do now your devoir, yonge knightes proude.
The heraudes left hir priking up and doun.
Now ringen trompes loud and clarioun.
Ther is no more to say, but est and west
In gon the speres sadly in the rest;
In goth the sharpe spore into the side.
Ther see men who can juste, and who can ride.
Ther shiveren shaftes upon sheldes thicke;
He feleth thurgh the herte-spone the pricke.
Up springen speres twenty foot on highte;
Out gon the swerdes as the silver brighte.
The helmes they to-hewen, and to-shrede;
Out brest the blod, with sterne stremes rede.
With mighty maces the bones they to-breste.
He thurgh the thickest of the throng gan threste.
Ther stomblen stedes strong, and doun goth all.
He rolleth under foot as doth a ball.
He foineth on his foo with a tronchoun,
And he him hurtleth with his hors adoun.
He thurgh the body is hurt, and sith ytake
Maugre his hed, and brought unto the stake,
As forword was, right ther he must abide.
Another lad is on that other side.
And somtime doth hem Theseus to rest,
Hem to refresh, and drinken if hem lest.
Ful oft a day han thilke Thebanes two
Togeder met, and wrought eche other wo:
Unhorsed hath eche other of hem twey.
Ther n'as no tigre in the vale of Galaphey,
Whan that hire whelpe is stole, whan it is lite,
So cruel on the hunt, as is Arcite
For jalous herte upon this Palamon:
Ne in Belmarie ther n'is so fell leon,
That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
Ne of his prey desireth so the blood,
As Palamon to sleen his foo Arcite.
The jalous strokes on hir helmes bite;
Out renneth blood on both hir sides rede.
Somtime an ende ther is of every dede.
For er the sonne unto the reste went,
The stronge king Emetrius gan hent
This Palamon, as he fought with Arcite,
And made his swerd depe in his flesh to bite.
And by the force of twenty is he take
Unyolden, and ydrawen to the stake.
And in the rescous of this Palamon
The stronge king Licurge is borne adoun:
And king Emetrius for all his strengthe
Is borne out of his sadel a swerdes lengthe,
So hitte him Palamon or he were take:
But all for nought, he was brought to the stake.
His hardy herte might him helpen naught,
He moste abiden, whan that he was caught,
By force, and eke by composition.
Who sorweth now but woful Palamon!
That moste no more gon again to fight.
And whan that Theseus had seen that sight,
Unto the folk that foughten thus eche on,
He cried, ho! no more, for it is don.
I wol be trewe juge, and not partie.
Arcite of Thebes shal have Emelie,
That by his fortune hath hire fayre ywonne.
Anon ther is a noise of peple begonne
For joye of this, so loud and high withall,
It semed that the listes shulden fall.
What can now fayre Venus don above!
What saith she now! what doth this quene of love!
But wepeth so, for wanting of hire will,
Til that hire teres in the listes fill:
She sayde: I am ashamed doutelees.
Saturnus sayde: Daughter, hold thy pees.
Mars hath his will, his knight hath all his bone,
And by min hed thou shalt ben esed sone.
The trompoures with the loude minstralcie,
The heraudes, that so loude yell and crie,
Ben in hir joye for wele of Dan Arcite.
But herkeneth me, and stenteth noise a lite,
Whiche a miracle ther befell anon.
This fierce Arcite hath of his helme ydon,
And on a courser for to shew his face
He priketh endelong the large place,
Loking upward upon this Emelie;
And she again him cast a frendlich eye,
(For women, as to speken in commune,
They folwen all the favour of fortune)
And was all his in chere, as his in herte.
Out of the ground a fury infernal sterte,
From Pluto sent, at requeste of Saturne,
For which his hors for fere gan to turne,
And lepte aside, and foundred as he lepe:
And er that Arcite may take any kepe,
He pight him on the pomel of his hed,
That in the place he lay as he were ded,
His brest to-brosten with his sadel bow.
As blake he lay as any cole or crow,
So was the blood yronnen in his face.
Anon he was yborne out of the place
With herte sore, to Theseus paleis.
Tho was he corven out of his harneis,
And in a bed ybrought ful fayre and blive,
For he was yet in memorie, and live,
And alway crying after Emelie.
Duk Theseus, with all his compagnie,
Is comen home to Athenes his citee,
With alle blisse and gret solempnite.
Al be it that this aventure was falle,
He n'olde not discomforten hem alle.
Men sayden eke, that Arcite shal not die,
He shal ben heled of his maladie.
And of another thing they were as fayn,
That of hem alle was ther non yslain,
Al were they sore yhurt, and namely on,
That with a spere was thirled his brest bone.
To other woundes, and to broken armes,
Som hadden salves, and som hadden charmes:

acies of herbes, and eke save
nken, for they wold hir lives have.
n this noble duk, as he wel can,
:h and honoureth every man,
e revel all the longe night,
strange lordes, as was right.
'as holden no discomforting,
justes or a tourneying;
y ther n'as no discomfiture,
g n'is not but an aventure.
lad by force unto a stake
, and with twenty knightes take,
all alone, withouten mo,
ed forth by armes, foot, and too,
nis stede driven forth with staves,
men, bothe yemen and eke knaves,
etted him no vilanie:
no man clepen it cowardie.
n anon duk Theseus let crie,
n alle rancour and envie,
as well of o side as of other,
er side ylike, as others brother:
hem giftes after hir degree,
e a feste fully dayes three:
eyed the kinges worthily
s toun a journee largely.
e went every man the righte way,
no more, but farewel, have good day.
taille I wol no more endite,
of Pakamon and of Arcite.
h the brest of Arcite, and the sore
n at his herte more and more.
red blood, for any leche-craft,
eth, and is in his bouke ylaft,
her veine-blood, ne ventousing,
of herbes may ben his helping.
ne expulsif, or animal,
e vertue cleped natural,
he venime voiden, ne expell.
of his longes gan to swell,
y lacerte in his brest adoun
with venime and corruptioun.
eth neyther, for to get his lif,
ward, ne dounward laxatif;
prosten thilke region;
ath now no domination.
ainly ther nature wol not werche,
physike; go bere the man to cherche.
l and som, that Arcite moste die.
n he sendeth after Emelie,
mon, that was his cosin dere.
l he thus, as ye shuln after here.
may the woful spirit in myn herte
point of all my sorwes smerte
ny lady, that I love most;
quethe the service of my gost
poven every creature,
ny lif ne may no lenger dure.
e wo! alas the peines stronge,
r you have suffered, and so longe!
leth! alas min Emelie!
rting of our compagnie!
hertes quene! alas my wif!
s ladie, ender of my lif!
his world! what axen men to have!
his love, now in his colde grave
houten any compagnie.
ny swete, farewel min Emelie,
take me in your armes twey,
of God, and herkeneth what I sey.

I have here with my cosin Palamon
Had strif and rancour many a day agon
For love of you, and for my jalousie.
And Jupiter so wis my soule gie,
To speken of a servant proprely,
With alle circumstances trewely,
That is to sayn, trouth, honour, and knighthede,
Wisdom, humblesse, estat, and high kinrede,
Fredom, and all that longeth to that art,
So Jupiter have of my soule part,
As in this world right now ne know I non,
So worthy to be loved as Palamon,
That serveth you, and wol don all his lif.
And if that ever ye shal ben a wif,
Foryete not Palamon, the gentil man.
And with that word his speche faille began.
For from his feet up to his brest was come
The cold of deth, that had him overnome.
And yet moreover in his armes two
The vital strength is lost, and all ago.
Only the intellect, withouten more,
That dwelled in his herte sike and sore,
Gan faillen, whan the herte felte deth;
Dusked his eyen two, and failled his breth.
But on his ladie yet cast he his eye;
His laste word was; Mercy, Emelie!
His spirit changed hous, and wente ther,
As I came never I cannot tellen wher.
Therfore I stent, I am no divinistre;
Of soules find I not in this registre.
Ne me lust not th' opinions to telle
Of hem, though that they writen wher they dwelle.
Arcite is cold, ther Mars his soule gie.
Now wol I speken forth of Emelie.
Shright Emelie, and houleth Palamon,
And Theseus his sister toke anon
Swouning, and bare hire from the corps away.
What helpeth it to tarien forth the day,
To tellen how she wep both even and morwe?
For in swiche cas wimmen have swiche sorwe,
Whan that hir housbonds ben fro hem ago,
That for the more part they sorwen so,
Or elles fallen in swiche maladie,
That atte laste certainly they die.
Infinite ben the sorwes and the teres
Of olde folk, and folk of tendre yeres,
In all the toun for deth of this Theban:
For him ther wepeth bothe childe and man.
So gret a weping was ther non certain,
Whan Hector was ybrought, all fresh yslain
To Troy, alas! the pitee that was there,
Cratching of chekes, rending eke of here.
Why woldest thou be ded? thise women crie,
And haddest gold ynough, and Emelie.
No man might gladen this duk Theseus,
Saving his olde fader Egeus,
That knew this worldes transmutatioun,
As he had seen it chaungen up and doun,
Joye after wo, and wo after gladnesse;
And shewed him ensample and likenesse.
Right as ther died never man (quod he)
That he ne lived in erthe in som degree,
Right so ther lived never man (he seyd)
In all this world, that somtime he ne deyd.
This world n'is but a thurghfare ful of wo,
And we ben pilgrimes, passing to and fro:
Deth is an end of every worldes sore.
And over all this yet said he mochel more
To this effect, ful wisely to enhort
The peple, that they shuld hem recomfort.

Duk Theseus with all his besy cure
He casteth now, wher that the sepulture
Of good Arcite may best ymaked be,
And eke most honourable in his degree.
And at the last he toke conclusion,
That ther as first Arcite and Palamon
Hadden for love the bataille hem betwene,
That in that selve grove, sote and grene,
Ther as he hadde his amorous desires,
His complaint, and for love his hote fires,
He wolde make a fire, in which the office
Of funeral he might all accomplise;
And lete anon commande to hack and hewe
The okes old, and lay hem on a rew
In culpons, wel araied for to brenne.
His officers with swifte feet they renne
And ride anon at his commandement.
And after this, this Theseus hath sent
After a bere, and it all overspradde
With cloth of gold, the richest that he hadde;
And of the same suit he cladde Arcite.
Upon his hondes were his gloves white,
Eke on his hed a croune of laurer grene,
And in his hond a swerd ful bright and kene.
He laid him bare the visage on the bere,
Therwith he wept that pitee was to here.
And for the peple shulde seen him alle,
Whan it was day he brought him to the halle,
That roreth of the crying and the soun.
Tho came this woful Theban Palamon
With flotery berd, and ruggy asshy heres,
In clothes blake, ydropped all with teres,
And (passing over of weping Emelie)
The reufullest of all the compagnie.
And in as much as the service shuld be
The more noble and riche in his degree,
Duk Theseus let forth three stedes bring,
That trapped were in stele all glittering,
And covered with the armes of Dan Arcite.
And eke upon these stedes gret and white
Ther saten folk, of which on bare his sheld,
Another his spere up in his hondes held;
The thridde bare with him his bow Turkeis,
Of brent gold was the cas and the harneis:
And riden forth a pas with sorweful chere
Toward the grove, as ye shul after here.
The noblest of the Grekes that ther were
Upon hir shuldres carrieden the bere,
With slacke pas, and eyen red and wete,
Thurghout the citee, by the maister strete,
That sprad was all with black, and wonder hie
Right of the same is all the strete ywrie.
Upon the right hand went olde Egeus,
And on that other side duk Theseus,
With vessels in hir hond of gold ful fine,
All ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wine;
Eke Palamon, with ful gret compagnie:
And after that came woful Emelie,
With fire in hond, as was that time the gise,
To don the office of funeral service.
High labour, and ful gret apparailling
Was at the service of that fire making,
That with his grene top the heven raught,
And twenty fadom of brede the armes straught:
This is to sain, the boughes were so brode.
Of stre first ther was laied many a lode.
But how the fire was maked up on highte,
And eke the names how the trees highte,
As oke, fir, birch, aspe, alder, holm, poplere,
Wilow, elm, plane, ash, box, chestein, lind, laurere,
Maple, thorn, beche, hasel, ew, whipultre,
How they were feld, shal not be told for me;
Ne how the goddes rannen up and doun
Disherited of hir habitatioun,
In which they woneden in rest and pees,
Nimphes, Faunes, and Amadriades;
Ne how the bestes, and the briddes alle
Fledden for fere, whan the wood gan falle;
Ne how the ground agast was of the light,
That was not wont to see the sonne bright;
Ne how the fire was couched first with stre,
And than with drie stickes cloven a-thre,
And than with grene wood and spicerie,
And than with cloth of gold and with perrie,
And gerlonds hanging with ful many a flour,
The mirre, th'encense also with swete odour;
Ne how Arcita lay among all this,
Ne what richesse about his body is;
Ne how that Emelie, as was the gise,
Put in the fire of funeral service;
Ne how she swouned whan she made the fire,
Ne what she spake, ne what was hir desire;
Ne what jewelles men in the fire caste,
Whan that the fire was gret and brente faste;
Ne how som cast hir sheld, and som hir spere,
And of hir vestimentes, which they were,
And cuppes full of wine, and milk, and blood,
Into the fire, that brent as it were wood;
Ne how the Grekes with a huge route
Three times riden all the fire aboute
Upon the left hond, with a loud shouting,
And thries with hir speres clatering;
And thries how the ladies gan to crie;
Ne how that led was homeward Emelie;
Ne how Arcite is brent to ashen cold;
Ne how the liche-wake was yhold
All thilke night, ne how the Grekes play.
The wake-plaies ne kepe I not to say:
Who wrestled best naked, with oile enoint,
Ne who that bare him best in no disjoint.
I woll not tellen eke how they all gon
Home til Athenes whan the play is don;
But shortly to the point now wol I wende,
And maken of my longe tale an ende.
By processe and by lengthe of certain yeres
All stenten is the mourning and the teres
Of Grekes, by on general assent.
Than semeth me ther was a parlement
At Athenes, upon certain points and cas:
Amonges the which points yspoken was
To have with certain contrees alliance,
And have of Thebanes fully obeisance.
For which this noble Theseus anon
Let senden after gentil Palamon,
Unwist of him, what was the cause and why:
But in his blacke clothes sorwefully
He came at his commandement on hie;
Tho sente Theseus for Emelie.
Whan they were set, and husht was al the place,
And Theseus abiden hath a space,
Or any word came from his wise brest
His eyen set he ther as was his lest,
And with a sad visage he siked still,
And after that right thus he sayd his will.
The firste mover of the cause above
Whan he firste made the fayre chaine of love,
Gret was th' effect, and high was his entent;
Wel wist he why, and what therof he ment:
For with that fayre chaine of love he bond
The fire, the air, the watre, and the lond

ain bondes, that they may not flee :
.me prince and mover eke (quod he)
ablisht, in this wretched world adoun,
of dayes and duration
hat are engendred in this place,
ie which day they ne mow not pace,
; they yet dayes wel abrege.
:deth non autoritee allege,
s preved by experience,
.t me lust declaren my sentence.
iay men by this ordre wel discerne,
ilke mover stable is and eterne.
iy men knowen, but it be a fool,
'ery part deriveth from his hool.
.ure hath not taken his beginning
iartie ne cantel of a thing,
i thing that parfit is and stable,
ling so, til it be corrumpable.
erfore of his wise purveyance
i so wel beset his ordinance,
eces of thinges and progressions
enduren by successions,
t eterne, withouten any lie :
iiest thou understand and seen at eye.
oke, that hath so long a norishing
time that it ginneth first to spring,
th so long a lif, as ye may see,
the laste wasted is the tree.
'reth eke, how that the harde stone
our feet, on which we trede and gon,
eth, as it lieth by the wey.
ode river somtime wexeth drey.
:te tounes see we wane and wende.
iay ye see that all thing hath an ende.
and woman see we wel also,
:des in on of the termes two,
to sayn, in youthe or elles age,
:e be ded, the king as shall a page ;
his bed, som in the depe see,
the large feld, as ye may see :
elpeth nought, all goth that ilke wey :
iay I sayn that alle thing mote dey.
naketh this but Jupiter the king ?
iich is prince, and cause of alle thing,
ting alle unto his propre wille,
which it is derived, soth to telle.
:re-againes no creature on live
legree availleth for to strive.
i it wisdom, as it thinketh me,
ten vertue of necessite,
ke it wel, that we may not eschewe,
.mely that to us all is dewe.
io so grutcheth ought, he doth folie,
bel is to him that all may gie.
rtainly a man hath most honour
i in his excellence and flour,
he is siker of his goode name.
ath he don his frend, ne him, no shame ;
And glader ought his frend ben of his deth,
Whan with honour is yolden up his breth,
Than whan his name appalled is for age ;
For all foryetten is his vassallage.
Than is it best, as for a worthy fame,
To dien whan a man is best of name.
The contrary of all this is wilfulnesse.
Why grutchen we ? why have we hevinesse,
That good Arcite, of chivalry the flour,
Departed is, with dutee and honour,
Out of this foule prison of this lif ?
Why grutchen here his cosin and his wif
Of his welfare, that loven him so wel ?
Can he hem thank ? nay, God wot, never a del,
That both his soule, and eke hemself offend,
And yet they mow hir lustes not amend.
What may I conclude of this longe serie,
But after sorwe I rede us to be merie,
And thanken Jupiter of all his grace.
And er that we departen from this place,
I rede that we make of sorwes two
O parfit joye lasting evermo :
And loketh now wher most sorwe is herein,
Ther wol I firste amenden and begin.
Sister, (quod he) this is my full assent,
With all th'avis here of my parlement,
That gentil Palamon, your owen knight,
That serveth you with will, and herte, and might,
And ever hath don, sin ye first him knew,
That ye shall of your grace upon him rew,
And taken him for husbond and for lord :
Lene me your hand, for this is oure accord.
Let see now of your womanly pitee.
He is a kinges brothers sone pardee,
And though he were a poure bachelere,
Sin he hath served you so many a yere,
And had for you so gret adversite,
It moste ben considered, leveth me.
For gentil mercy oweth to passen right.
Than sayd he thus to Palamon the knight ;
I trow ther nedeth litel sermoning
To maken you assenten to this thing.
Cometh ner, and take your lady by the hond.
Betwixen hem was maked anon the bond,
That highte matrimoine or mariage,
By all the conseil of the baronage.
And thus with alle blisse and melodie
Hath Palamon ywedded Emelie.
And God that all this wide world hath wrought,
Send him his love, that hath it dere ybought.
For now is Palamon in alle wele,
Living in blisse, in richesse, and in hele,
And Emelie him loveth so tendrely,
And he hire serveth al so gentilly,
That never was ther no word hem betwene
Of jalousie, ne of non other tene.
Thus endeth Palamon and Emelie ;
And God save all this fayre compagnie.

THE MILLERES TALE.

THE MILLERES PROLOGUE.

WHAN that the Knight had thus his tale told,
In all the compagnie n'as ther yong ne old,
That he ne said it was a noble storie,
And worthy to be drawen to memorie ;
And namely the gentiles everich on.
Our Hoste lough and swore, So mote I gon,
This goth aright ; unbokeled is the male ;
Let see now who shal tell another tale :
For trewely this game is wel begonne.
Now telleth ye, sire Monk, if that ye conne,
Somwhat, to quiten with the knightes tale.
The Miller that for-dronken was all pale,
So that unethes upon his hors he sat,
He n'old avalen neither hood ne hat,
Ne abiden no man for his curtesie,
But in Pilates vois he gan to crie,
And swore by armes, and by blood, and bones,
I can a noble tale for the nones,
With which I wol now quite the knightes tale.
Our Hoste saw that he was dronken of ale,
And sayd ; abide, Robin, my leve brother,
Som better man shall tell us first another :
Abide, and let us werken thriftily.
By Goddes soule (quod he) that wol not I,
For I wol speke, or elles go my way.
Our Hoste answerd ; Tell on a devil way ;
Thou art a fool ; thy wit is overcome.
Now herkeneth, quod the Miller, all and some :
But first I make a protestatioun,
That I am dronke, I know it by my soun :
And therfore if that I misspeke or say,
Wite it the ale of Southwerk, I you pray :
For I wol tell a legend and a lif
Both of a carpenter and of his wif,
How that a clerk hath set the wrightes cappe.
The Reve answerd and saide, Stint thy clappe.
Let be thy lewed dronken harlotrie.
It is a sinne, and eke a gret folie
To apeiren any man, or him defame,
And eke to bringen wives in swiche a name.
Thou mayst ynough of other thinges sain.
This dronken Miller spake ful sone again,
And sayde ; Leve brother Osewold,
Who hath no wif, he is no cokewold.
But I say not therfore that thou art on ;
Ther ben ful goode wives many on.
Why art thou angry with my tale now ?
I have a wif parde as wel as thou,
Yet n'olde I, for the oxen in my plough,
Taken upon me more than ynough
As demen of myself that I am on ;
I wol beleven wel that I am non.
An husbond shuld not ben inquisitif
Of Goddes privite, ne of his wif.
So he may finden Goddes foison there,
Of the remenant nedeth not to enquere.

What shuld I more say, but this Millere
He n'olde his wordes for no man forbere,
But told his cherles tale in his manere,
Me thinketh, that I shal reherse it here.
And therfore every gentil wight I pray,
For Goddes love as deme not that I say
Of evil entent, but that I mote reherse
Hir tales alle, al be they better or werse,
Or elles falsen som of my matere.
And therfore who so list it not to here,
Turne over the leef, and chese another tale,
For he shal find ynow bothe gret and smale,
Of storial thing that toucheth gentillesse,
And eke moralite, and holinesse.
Blameth not me, if that ye chese amis.
The Miller is a cherl, ye know wel this,
So was the Reve, (and many other mo)
And harlotrie they tolden bothe two.
Aviseth you now, and put me out of blame ;
And eke men shuld not make ernest of game.

THE MILLERES TALE.

WHILOM ther was dwelling in Oxenforde
A riche gnof, that gestes helde to borde,
And of his craft he was a carpenter.
With him ther was dwelling a poure scoler,
Had lerned art, but all his fantasie
Was turned for to lerne astrologie,
And coude a certain of conclusions
To demen by interrogations,
If that men asked him in certain houres,
Whan that men shulde have drought or elles shoures
Or if men asked him what shulde falle
Of every thing, I may not reken alle.
This clerk was cleped hendy Nicholas ;
Of derne love he coude and of solas ;
And therto he was slie and ful prive,
And like a maiden meke for to se.
A chambre had he in that hostelrie
Alone, withouten any compagnie,
Ful fetisly ydight with herbes sote,
And he himself was swete as is the rote
Of licoris, or any setewale.
His almageste, and bokes gret and smale,
His astrelabre, longing for his art,
His augrim stones, layen faire apart
On shelves couched at his beddes hed,
His presse ycovered with a falding red.
And all above ther lay a gay sautrie,
On which he made on nightes melodie,
So swetely, that all the chambre rong :
And *Angelus ad virginem* he song.
And after that he song the kinges note ;
Ful often blessed was his mery throte.
And thus this swete clerk his time spent
After his frendes finding and his rent.
This carpenter had wedded new a wif,
Which that he loved more than his lif :
Of eightene yere she was I gesse of age.
Jalous he was, and held hire narwe in cage.

ıs wild and yonge, and he was old,
l himself belike a cokewold.
ıot Caton, for his wit was rude,
a man shulde wedde his similitude.
en wedden after hir estate,
: and elde is often at debate.
he was fallen in the snare,
ıdure (as other folk) his care.
as this yonge wif, and therwithal
ıel hire body gent and smal.
: wered, barred all of silk,
loth eke as white as morwe milk
lendes, ful of many a gore.
hire smok, and brouded all before
:hind on hire colere aboute
ck silk, within and eke withoute.
of hire white volupere
ıe same suit of hire colere;
brode of silk, and set full hye:
: she had a likerous eye.
pulled were hire browes two,
vere bent, and black as any slo.
:l more blisful on to see
: newe perjenete tree;
than the wolle is of a wether.
hire girdel heng a purse of lether,
ith silk, and perled with latoun.
world to seken up and doun
ıo man so wise, that coude thenche
ɔpelot, or swiche a wenche.
:r was the shining of hire hewe,
e tour the noble yforged newe.
: song, it was as loud and yerne,
ılow sitting on a berne.
e coude skip, and make a game,
or calf folowing his dame.
h was swete as braket or the meth,
apples, laid in hay or heth.
ıe was, as is a joly colt,
mast, and upright as a bolt.
she bare upon hire low colere,
ıs is the bosse of a bokelere.
ı were laced on hire legges hie;
primerole, a piggesnie,
rd to liggen in his bedde,
any good yeman to wedde.
e, and eft sire, so befell the cas,
day this hendy Nicholas
ıis yonge wif to rage and pleye,
t hire husbond was at Oseney,
ben ful subtil and ful queint.
ly he caught hire by the queint,
; Ywis, but if I have my will,
love of thee, lemman, I spill.
hire faste by the hanche bones,
; Lemman, love me wel at ones,
lien, al so God me save.
: sprong as a colt doth in the trave:
hire hed she writhed faste away,
: I wol not kisse thee by my fay.
e, (quod she) let be, Nicholas,
:rie out harow and alas.
ɔur hondes for your curtesie.
cholas gan mercy for to crie,
: so faire, and profered him so fast,
ıire love him granted at the last,
: hire oth by Seint Thomas of Kent,
wold ben at his commandement,
t she may hire leiser wel espie.
ond is so ful of jalousie,
That but ye waiten wel, and be prive,
I wot right wel I n'am but ded, quod she.
Ye mosten be ful derne as in this cas.
Nay, therof care you not, quod Nicholas:
A clerk had litherly beset his while,
But if he coude a carpenter begile.
And thus they were accorded and ysworne
To waite a time, as I have said beforne.
Whan Nicholas had don thus every del,
And thacked hire about the lendes wel,
He kissed hire swete, and taketh his sautrie,
And plaieth fast, and maketh melodie.
Than fell it thus, that to the parish cherche
(Of Cristes owen werkes for to werche)
This good wif went upon a holy day:
Hire forehed shone as bright as any day,
So was it washen, whan she lete hire werk.
Now was ther of that chirche a parish clerk,
The which that was ycleped Absolon.
Crulle was his here, and as the gold it shon,
And strouted as a fanne large and brode;
Ful streight and even lay his joly shode.
His rode was red, his eyen grey as goos,
With Poules windowes corven on his shoos.
In hosen red he went ful fetisly.
Yclad he was ful smal and proprely.
All in a kirtel of a light waget;
Ful faire and thicke ben the pointes set.
And therupon he had a gay surplise,
As white as is the blosme upon the rise.
A mery child he was, so God me save;
Wel coud he leten blod, and clippe, and shave,
And make a chartre of lond, and a quitance.
In twenty manere coud he trip and dance,
(After the scole of Oxenforde tho)
And with his legges casten to and fro;
And playen songes on a smal ribible;
Therto he song somtime a loud quinible.
And as wel coud he play on a giterne.
In all the toun n'as brewhous ne taverne,
That he ne visited with his solas,
Ther as that any gaillard tapstere was.
But soth to say he was somdel squaimous
Of farting, and of speche dangerous.
This Absolon, that joly was and gay,
Goth with a censer on the holy day,
Censing the wives of the parish faste;
And many a lovely loke he on hem caste,
And namely on this carpenteres wif:
To loke on hire him thought a mery lif.
She was so propre, and swete, and likerous.
I dare wel sain, if she had ben a mous,
And he a cat, he wolde hire hente anon.
This parish clerk, this joly Absolon,
Hath in his herte swiche a love-longing,
That of no wif toke he non offering;
For curtesie, he sayd, he n'olde non.
The moone at night ful clere and brighte shon,
And Absolon his giterne hath ytake,
For paramours he thoughte for to wake.
And forth he goth, jolif and amorous,
Til he came to the carpenteres hous,
A litel after the cockes had ycrow,
And dressed him up by a shot window,
That was upon the carpenteres wal.
He singeth in his vois gentil and smal;
Now, dere lady,—if thy wille be,
I pray you that ye—wol rewe on me;
Ful wel accordant to his giterning.
This carpenter awoke, and herd him sing,

And spake unto his wif, and said anon,
What, Alison, heres thou not Absolon,
That chanteth thus under our boures wal?
And she answerd hire husbond therwithal;
Yes, God wot, John, I here him every del.
This passeth forth; what wol ye bet than wel?
Fro day to day this joly Absolon
So loveth hire, that him is wo-begon.
He waketh all the night, and all the day,
He kembeth his lockes brode, and made him gay.
He woeth hire by menes and brocage,
And swore he wolde ben hire owen page.
He singeth brokking as a nightingale.
He sent hire pinnes, methe, and spiced ale,
And wafres piping hot out of the glede:
And for she was of toun, he profered mede.
For som folk wol be wonnen for richesse,
And som for strokes, and som with gentillesse.
Somtime to shew his lightnesse and maistrie
He plaieth Herode on a skaffold hie.
But what availeth him as in this cas?
So loveth she this hendy Nicholas,
That Absolon may blow the buckes horne:
He ne had for his labour but a scorne.
And thus she maketh Absolon hire ape,
And all his ernest tourneth to a jape.
Ful soth is this proverbe, it is no lie;
Men say right thus alway; the neighe slie
Maketh oft time the fer leef to be lothe.
For though that Absolon be wood or wrothe,
Because that he fer was from hire sight,
This neighe Nicholas stood in his light.
Now bere thee wel, thou hendy Nicholas,
For Absolon may waile and sing alas.
And so befell that on a Saturday,
This carpenter was gon to Osenay,
And hendy Nicholas and Alison
Accorded ben to this conclusion,
That Nicholas shal shapen him a wile
This sely jalous husbond to begile;
And if so were the game went aright,
She shuld slepe in his armes alle night,
For this was hire desire and his also.
And right anon, withouten wordes mo,
This Nicholas no lenger wolde farie,
But doth ful soft unto his chambre carie
Both mete and drinke for a day or twey.
And to hire husbond bad hire for to sey,
If that he axed after Nicholas,
She shulde say, she n'iste not wher he was;
Of all the day she saw him not with eye.
She trowed he was in som maladie,
For for no crie hire maiden coud him calle
He n'olde answer, for nothing that might falle.
Thus passeth forth all thilke Saturday,
That Nicholas still in his chambre lay,
And ete, and slept, and dide what him list
Til Sonday, that the sonne goth to rest.
This sely carpenter hath gret mervaile
Of Nicholas, or what thing might him aile,
And said; I am adrad by Seint Thomas
It stondeth not aright with Nicholas:
God shilde that he died sodenly.
This world is now ful tikel sikerly.
I saw to-day a corps yborne to cherche,
That now on Monday last I saw him werche.
Go up (quod he unto his knave) anon,
Clepe at his dore, or knocke with a ston:
Loke how it is, and tell me boldely.
This knave goth him up ful sturdely,
And at the chambre dore while that he stood,
He cried and knocked as that he were wood:
What how? what do ye, maister Nicholay?
How may ye slepen all the longe day?
But all for nought, he herde not a word.
An hole he fond ful low upon the bord,
Ther as the cat was wont in for to crepe,
And at that hole he loked in ful depe,
And at the last he had of him a sight.
This Nicholas sat ever gaping upright,
As he had kyked on the newe mone.
Adoun he goth, and telleth his maister sone,
In what array he saw this ilke man.
This carpenter to blissen him began,
And said; Now helpe us Seinte Frideswide.
A man wote litel what shal him betide.
This man is fallen with his astronomie
In som woodnesse or in som agonie.
I thought ay wel how that it shulde be.
Men shulde not knowe of Goddes privetee.
Ya blessed be alway a lewed man,
That nought but only his beleve can.
So ferd another clerk with astronomie;
He walked in the feldes for to prie
Upon the sterres, what ther shuld befalle,
Til he was in a marlepit yfalle.
He saw not that. But yet by Seint Thomas
Me reweth sore of hendy Nicholas:
He shal be rated of his studying,
If that I may, by Jesus heven king.
Get me a staf, that I may underspore
While that thou, Robin, hevest of the dore:
He shal out of his studying, as I gesse.
And to the chambre dore he gan him dresse.
His knave was a strong carl for the nones,
And by the haspe he haf it of at ones;
Into the flore the dore fell anon.
This Nicholas sat ay as stille as ston,
And ever he gaped upward into the eire.
This carpenter wend he were in despeire,
And hent him by the shulders mightily,
And shoke him hard, and cried spitously;
What, Nicholas? what how man? loke adoun:
Awake, and thinke on Cristes passioun.
I crouche thee from elves, and from wightes.
Therwith the nightspel said he anon rightes,
On foure halves of the hous aboute,
And on the threswold of the dore withoute.
Jesu Crist, and Seint Benedight,
Blisse this hous from every wicked wight,
Fro the nightes mare, the wite Pater-noster;
Wher wonest thou Seint Peters suster?
And at the last this hendy Nicholas
Gan for to siken sore, and said; Alas!
Shal all the world be lost eftsones now?
This carpenter answered; What saiest thou?
What? thinke on God, as we do, men that swinke.
This Nicholas answered; Fetch me a drinke;
And after wol I speke in privetee
Of certain thing that toucheth thee and me:
I wol tell it non other man certain.
This carpenter goth doun, and cometh again,
And brought of mighty ale a large quart;
And whan that eche of hem had dronken his part,
This Nicholas his dore faste shette,
And doun the carpenter by him he sette,
And saide; John, min hoste lefe and dere,
Thou shalt upon thy trouthe swere me here,
That to no wight thou shalt my conseil wrey:
For it is Cristes conseil that I say,

' thou tell it man, thou art forlore :
is vengeance thou shalt have therfore,
f thou wreye me, thou shalt be wood.
, Crist forbede it for his holy blood,
tho this sely man ; I am no labbe,
ough I say it, I n'am not lefe to gabbe.
hat thou wolt, I shal it never telle
ld ne wif, by him that harwed helle.
r, John, (quod Nicholas) I wol not lie,
yfounde in min astrologie,
ave loked in the moone bright,
ow on Monday next, at quarter night,
all a rain, and that so wild and wood
alf so gret was never Noes flood.
orld (he said) in lesse than in an houre
l be dreint, so hidous is the shoure :
hal mankinde drenche, and lese hir lif.
carpenter answerd ; Alas my wif !
al she drenche ? alas min Alisoun !
rwe of this he fell almost adoun,
aid ; Is ther no remedy in this cas ?
y yes, for God, quod hendy Nicholas ;
u wolt werken after lore and rede ;
naist not werken after thin owen hede.
us saith Salomon, that was ful trewe ;
all by conseil, and thou shalt not rewe.
thou werken wolt by good conseil,
rtake, withouten mast or seyl,
al I saven hire, and thee and me.
hou not herd how saved was Noe,
that our Lord had warned him beforne,
l the world with water shuld be lorne ?
(quod this carpenter) ful yore ago.
thou not herd (quod Nicholas) also
rwe of Noe with his felawship,
t he might get his wif to ship ?
ad be lever I dare wel undertake,
ke time, than all his wethers blake,
he had had a ship hireself alone.
erfore wost thou what is best to done ?
ceth hast, and of an hastif thing
ay not preche and maken tarying.
o get us fast into this in
ling trough or elles a kemelyn,
he of us ; but loke that they hen large,
ch we mowen swimme as in a barge :
ave therin vitaille suffisant
r a day ; fie on the remenant ;
ater shall aslake and gon away
n prime upon the nexte day.
obin may not wete of this, thy knave,
thy mayden Gille I may hot save :
ot why : for though thou axe me,
not tellen Goddes privetee.
th thee, but if thy wittes madde,
e as gret a grace as Noe hadde.
if shal I wel saven out of doute.
w thy way, and spede thee hereaboute.
whan thou hast for hire, and thee, and me,
n us these kneding tubbes thre,
shalt thou hang hem in the roofe ful hie,
o man of our purveyance espie :
han thou hast don thus as I have said,
ast our vitaille faire in hem yiaid,
ke an axe to smite the cord a-two
that the water cometh, that we may go,
reke an hole on high upon the gable
he gardin ward, over the stable,
e may frely passen forth our way,
that the grete shoure is gon away.
Than shal thou swim as mery, I undertake,
As doth the white doke after hire drake :
Than wol I clepe, How Alison, how John,
Be mery : for the flood wol passe anon.
And thou wolt sain, Haile maister Nicholay,
Good morwe, I see thee wel, for it is day.
And than shall we be lordes all our lif
Of all the world, as Noe and his wif.
But of o thing I warne thee ful right,
Be wel avised on that ilke night,
That we ben entred into shippes bord,
That non of us ne speke not o word,
Ne clepe ne crie, but be in his praiere,
For it is Goddes owen heste dere.
Thy wif and thou moste hangen fer a-twinne,
For that betwixen you shal be no sinne,
No more in loking than ther shal in dede.
This ordinance is said ; go, God thee spede.
To-morwe at night, whan men ben all aslepe,
Into our kneding tubbes wol we crepe,
And sitten ther, abiding Goddes grace.
Go now thy way, I have no lenger space
To make of this no lenger sermoning :
Men sain thus : send the wise, and say nothing :
Thou art so wise, it nedeth thee nought teche.
Go, save our lives, and that I thee bescche.
This sely carpenter goth forth his way,
Ful oft he said alas, and wala wa,
And to his wif he told his privetee,
And she was ware, and knew it bet than he
What all this queinte cast was for to sey.
But natheles she ferde as she wold dey,
And said ; Alas ! go forth thy way anon.
Helpe us to scape, or we be ded eche on.
I am thy trewe veray wedded wif ;
Go, dere spouse, and helpe to save our lif.
Lo, what a gret thing is affection,
Men may die of imagination,
So depe may impression be take.
This sely carpenter beginneth quake :
Him thinketh veraily that he may see
Noes flood comen walwing as the see
To drenchen Alison, his hony dere.
He wepeth, waileth, maketh sory chere ;
He siketh, with ful many a sory swough.
He goth, and geteth him a kneding trough,
And after a tubbe, and a kemelin,
And prively he sent hem to his in :
And heng hem in the roof in privetee.
His owen hond than made he ladders three,
To climben by the renges and the stalkes
Unto the tubbes honging in the balkes ;
And vitailled bothe kemelin, trough and tubbe,
With bred and chese, and good ale in a jubbe,
Sufficing right ynow as for a day.
But er that he had made all this array,
He sent his knave, and eke his wenche also
Upon his nede to London for to go.
And on the Monday, whan it drew to night,
He shette his dore, withouten candel light,
And dressed all thing as it shulde bee.
And shortly up they clomben alle three.
They sitten stille wel a furlong way.
Now, *Pater noster*, clum, said Nicholay,
And clum, quod John, and clum, said Alison :
This carpenter said his devotion,
And still he sit, and biddeth his praiere,
Awaiting on the rain, if he it here.
The dede slepe, for wery besinesse,
Fell on this carpenter, right as I gesse,

Abouten curfew-time, or litêl more.
For travaille of his gost he groneth sore,
And eft he routeth, for his hed mislay.
Doun of the ladder stalketh Nicholay,
And Alison ful soft adoun hire spedde.
Withouten wordes mo they went to bedde,
Ther as the carpenter was wont to lie;
Ther was the revel, and the melodie.
And thus lith Alison, and Nicholas,
In besinesse of mirthe and in solas,
Til that the bell of *laudes* gan to ring,
And freres in the chancel gon to sing.
This parish clerk, this amorous Absolon,
That is for love alway so wo-begon,
Upon the Monday was at Osenay
With compagnie, him to disport and play;
And asked upon cas a cloisterer
Ful prively after John the carpenter;
And he drew him apart out of the chirche.
He said, I n'ot; I saw him not here wirche
Sith Saturday; I trow that he be went
For timbre, ther our abbot hath him sent.
For he is wont for timbre for to go,
And dwellen at the Grange a day or two:
Or elles he is at his hous certain.
Wher that he be, I cannot sothly sain.
This Absolon ful joly was and light,
And thoughte, now is time to wake al night,
For sikerly, I saw him nat stiring
About his dore, sin day began to spring.
So mote I thrive, I shal at cockes crow
Ful prively go knocke at his window,
That stant ful low upon his boures wall:
To Alison wol I now tellen all
My love-longing; for yet I shall not misse,
That at the leste way I shal hire kisse.
Some maner comfort shal I have parfay,
My mouth hath itched all this longe day:
That is a signe of kissing at the leste.
All night me mette eke, I was at a feste.
Therfore I wol go slepe an houre or twey,
And all the night than wol I wake and pley.
Whan that the firste cock hath crowe, anon
Up rist this joly lover Absolon,
And him arayeth gay, at point devise.
But first he cheweth grein and licorise,
To smellen sote, or he had spoke with here.
Under his tonge a trewe love he bere,
For therby wend he to ben gracious.
He cometh to the carpenteres hous,
And still he stant under the shot window;
Unto his brest it raught, it was so low;
And soft he cougheth with a semisoun.
What do ye honycombe, swete Alisoun?
My faire bird, my swete sinamome,
Awaketh, lemman min, and speketh to me.
Ful litel thinken ye upon my wo,
That for your love I swete ther as I go.
No wonder is though that I swelte and swete.
I mourne as doth a lamb after the tete.
Ywis, lemman, I have swiche love-longing,
That like a turtel trewe is my mourning.
I may not ete no more than a maid.
Go fro the window, jacke fool, she said:
As helpe me God, it wol not be, compame,
I love another, or elles I were to blame,
Wel bet than thee by Jesu, Absolon.
Go forth thy way, or I wol cast a ston;
And let me slepe; a twenty divel way.
Alas! (quod Absolon) and wala wa!
That trewe love was ever so yvel besette:
Than kisse me, sin that it may be no bette,
For Jesus love, and for the love of me.
Wilt thou than go thy way therwith? quod she.
Ya certes, lemman, quod this Absolon.
Than make thee redy, (quod she) I come anon.
This Absolon doun set him on his knees,
And saide; I am a lord at all degrees:
For after this I hope ther cometh more;
Lemman, thy grace, and, swete bird, thyn ore.
The window she undoth, and that in haste.
Have don, (quod she) come of, and spede thee faste,
Lest that our neighebores thee espie.
This Absolon gan wipe his mouth ful drie.
Derke was the night, as pitch or as the cole,
And at the window she put out hire hole,
And Absolon him felle ne bet ne wers,
But with his mouth he kist hire naked ers
Ful savorly, er he was ware of this.
Abak he sterte, and thought it was amis,
For wel he wist a woman hath no berd.
He felt a thing all rowe, and long yherd,
And saide; fy, alas! what have I do?
Te he, quod she, and clapt the window to;
And Absolon goth forth a sory pas.
A berd, a berd, said hendy Nicholas;
By goddes *corpus*, this goth faire and wel.
This sely Absolon herd every del,
And on his lippe he gan for anger bite;
And to himself he said, I shal thee quite.
Who rubbeth now, who froteth now his lippes
With dust, with sond, with straw, with cloth, with chippes,
But Absolon? that saith full oft, alas!
My soule betake I unto Sathanas,
But me were lever than all this toun (quod he)
Of this despit awroken for to be.
Alas! alas! that I ne had yblent.
His hote love is cold, and all yqueint.
For fro that time that he had kist hire ers,
Of paramours ne raught he not a kers,
For he was heled of his maladie;
Ful often paramours he gan defie,
And wepe as doth a child that is ybete.
A softe pas he went him over the strete
Until a smith, men callen dan Gerveis,
That in his forge smithed plow-harneis;
He sharpeth share and cultre besily.
This Absolon knocketh all esily,
And said; Undo, Gerveis, and that anon.
What, who art thou? It am I Absolon.
What? Absolon, what? Cristes swete tre,
Why rise ye so rath? ey *benedicite*,
What eileth you? some gay girle, God it wote,
Hath brought you thus upon the viretote:
By Seint Neote, ye wote wel what I mene.
This Absolon ne raughte not a bene
Of all his play; no word again he yaf.
He hadde more tawe on his distaf
Than Gerveis knew, and saide; Frend so dere,
That hote culter in the cheminee here
As lene it me, I have therwith to don:
I wol it bring again to thee ful sone.
Gerveis answered; Certes, were it gold,
Or in a poke nobles all untold,
Thou shuldest it have, as I am trewe smith.
Ey, Cristes foot, what wol ye don therwith?
Therof, quod Absolon, be as be may;
I shal wel tellen thee another day:

ght the culter by the colde stele.
out at the dore he gan to stele,
it unto the carpenteres wall.
hed first, and knocked therwithall
e window, right as he did er.
Alison answered; Who is ther
ocketh so! I warrant him a thefe.
nay, (quod he) God wot, my swete lefe,
in Absolon, thy dereling.
(quod he) I have thee brought a ring,
her yave it me, so God me save,
it is, and therto wel ygrave:
I I yeven thee, if thou me kisse.
Nicholas was risen for to pisse,
ught he wolde amenden all the jape,
de kisse his ers er that he scape:
the window did he hastily,
his ers he putteth prively
buttok, to the hanche bon.
rwith spake this clerk, this Absolon,
vete bird, I n'ot not wher thou art.
Nicholas anon let fleen a fart,
as it had ben a thonder dint,
th the stroke he was wel nie yblint:
was redy with his yren hote,
holas amid the ers he smote.
th the skinne an hondbrede al aboute.
culter brenned so his toute,
the smert he wened for to die;
ere wood, for wo he gan to crie,
ater, water, help for Goddes herte.
carpenter out of his slomber sterte,
d on crie water, as he were wood,
ught, alas, now cometh Noes flood.
im up withouten wordes mo,
And with his axe he smote the cord atwo;
And doun goth all; he fond neyther to selle
Ne breed ne ale, til he came to the selle,
Upon the flore, and ther aswoune he lay.
Up sterten Alison and Nicholay,
And crieden, out and harow! in the strete.
The neigheboures bothe smale and grete
In rannen, for to gauren on this man,
That yet aswoune lay, bothe pale and wan:
For with the fall he brosten hath his arm.
But stonden he must unto his owen harm,
For whan he spake, he was anon bore doun
With hendy Nicholas and Alisoun.
They tolden every man that he was wood;
He was agaste so of Noes flood
Thurgh fantasie, that of his vanitee
He had ybought him kneding tubbes three,
And had hem honged in the roof above;
And that he praied hem for Goddes love
To sitten in the roof *par compagnie.*
The folk gan laughen at his fantasie.
Into the roof they kyken, and they gape,
And turned all his harm into a jape.
For what so that this carpenter answerd,
It was for nought, no man his reson herd.
With othes gret he was so sworne adoun,
That he was holden wood in all the toun.
For everich clerk anon right held with other;
They said, the man was wood, my leve brother
And every wight gan laughen at this strif.
Thus swived was the carpenteres wif,
For all his keping, and his jalousie;
And Absolon hath kist hire nether eye;
And Nicholas is scalded in the toute.
This tale is don, and God save all the route.

THE REVES TALE.

THE REVES PROLOGUE.

olk han laughed at this nice cas
lon and hendy Nicholas,
folk diversely they saide,
the more part they lought and plaide;
is tale I saw no man him greve,
ere only Osewold the Reve.
he was of carpenteres craft,
re is in his herte ylaft;
to grutch and blamen it a lite.
k, quod he, ful wel coude I him quite
ering of a proude milleres eye,
me list to speke of ribaudrie.
an olde; me list not play for age;
ne is don, my foddre is now forage.
ite top writeth min olde yeres;
te is also mouled as min heres;
fare as doth an open-ers;
e fruit is ever lenger the wers,
e roten in mullok, or in stre.
lde men, I drede, so faren we,
e roten, can we not be ripe;
pe alway, while that the world wel pipe;
For in our will ther stiketh ever a nayl,
To have an hore hed and a grene tayl,
As hath a leke; for though our might be gon,
Our will desireth folly ever in on:
For whan we may not don, than wol we speken,
Yet in our ashen cold is fire yreken.
Foure gledes han we, which I shal devise,
Avaunting, lying, anger, and covetise.
These foure sparkes longen unto elde.
Our olde limes mow wel ben unwelde,
But will ne shal not faillen, that is sothe.
And yet have I alway a coltes tothe,
As many a yere as it is passed henne,
Sin that my tappe of lif began to renne.
For sikerly, whan I was borne, anon
Deth drow the tappe of lif, and let it gon;
And ever sith hath so the tappe yronne,
Til that almost all empty is the tonne.
The streme of lif now droppeth on the chimbe.
The sely tonge may wel ringe and chimbe
Of wretchednesse, that passed is ful yore:
With olde folk, save dotage, is no more.
Whan that our Hoste had herd this sermon ing,
He gan to speke as lordly as a king.

And sayde ; What amounteth all this wit ?
What ! shall we speke all day of holy writ ?
The divel made a Reve for to preche,
Or of a souter a shipman, or a leche.
Say forth thy tale, and tary not the time :
Lo Depeford, and it is half way prime :
Lo Grenewich, ther many a shrew is inne.
It were al time thy tale to beginne.
Now, sires, quod this Osewold the Reve,
I pray you alle, that ye not you greve,
Though I answere, and somdel set his howve,
For leful is with force force off to showve.
This dronken Miller hath ytold us here,
How that begiled was a carpentere,
Paraventure in scorne, for I am on :
And by your leve, I shal him quite anon.
Right in his cherles termes wol I speke.
I pray to God his necke mote to-breke.
He can wel in min eye seen a stalk,
But in his owen he cannot seen a balk.

THE REVES TALE.

At Trompington, not fer fro Cantebrigge,
Ther goth a brook, and over that a brigge,
Upon the whiche brook ther stont a melle :
And this is veray sothe, that I you telle.
A miller was ther dwelling many a day,
As any peacok he was proude and gay :
Pipen he coude, and fishe, and nettes bete,
And turnen cuppes, and wrastlen wel, and shete.
Ay by his belt he bare a long pavade,
And of a swerd ful trenchant was the blade.
A joly popper bare he in his pouche ;
Ther n'as no man for peril dorst him touche.
A Shefeld thwitel bare he in his hose.
Round was his face, and camuse was his nose.
As pilled as an ape was his skull.
He was a market-beter at the full.
Ther dorste no wight hond upon him legge,
That he ne swore he shuld anon abegge.
A thefe he was forsoth, of corn and mele,
And that a slie, and usant for to stele.
His name was hoten deinous Simekin.
A wif he hadde, comen of noble kin :
The person of the toun hire father was.
With hire he yaf ful many a panne of bras,
For that Simkin shuld in his blood allie.
She was yfostered in a nonnerie :
For Simkin wolde no wif, as he sayde,
But she were wel ynourished, and a mayde,
To saven his estat of yemanrie :
And she was proud, and pert as is a pie.
A ful faire sight was it upon hem two.
On holy dayes beforne hire wold he go
With his tipet ybounde about his hed ;
And she came after in a gite of red,
And Simkin hadde hosen of the same.
Ther dorste no wight clepen hire but dame :
Was non so hardy, that went by the way,
That with hire dorste rage or ones play,
But if he wold be slain of Simekin
With pavade, or with knif, or bodekin.
(For jalous folk ben perilous evermo :
Algate they wold hir wives wenden so.)
And eke for she was somdel smoterlich,
She was as digne as water in a dich,
And al so ful of hoker, and of bismare.
Hire thoughte that a ladie shuld hire spare,
What for hire kinrede, and hire nortelrie,
That she had lerned in the nonnerie.
A doughter hadden they betwix hem twe
Of twenty yere, withouten any mo,
Saving a child that was of half yere age,
In cradle it lay, and was a propre page.
This wenche thicke and wel ygrowen was,
With camuse nose, and eyen grey as gias ;
With buttokes brode, and brestes round and hie ;
But right faire was hire here, I wol nat lie.
The person of the toun, for she was faire,
In purpos was to maken hire his haire
Both of his catel, and of his mesuage,
And strange he made it of hire mariage.
His purpos was for to bestowe hire hie
Into som worthy blood of ancestrie.
For holy chirches good mote ben despended
On holy chirches blood that is descended.
Therfore he wolde his holy-blood honoure,
Though that he holy chirche shuld devoure.
Gret soken hath this miller out of doute
With whete and malt, of all the land aboute ;
And namely ther was a gret college
Men clepe the Soler hall at Cantebrege,
Ther was hir whete and eke hir malt yground.
And on a day it happed in a stound,
Sike lay the manciple on a maladie,
Men wenden wisly that he shulde die.
For which this miller stale both mele and corn
An hundred times more than beforn.
For therbeforn he stale but curteisly,
But now he was a thefe outrageously.
For which the wardein chidde and made fare,
But therof set the miller not a tare ;
He craked bost, and swore it n'as not so.
Than were ther yonge poure scoleres two,
That dwelten in the halle of which I say ;
Testif they were, and lusty for to play ;
And only for hir mirth and revelrie
Upon the wardein besily they crie,
To yeve hem leve but a litel stound,
To gon to mille, and seen hir corn yground :
And hardily they dorsten lay hir necke,
The miller shuld not stele hem half a pecke
Of corn by sleighte, ne by force hem reve.
And at the last the wardein yave hem leave :
John highte that on, and Alein highte that other,
Of o toun were they born, that highte Strother,
Fer in the North, I can not tellen where.
This Alein maketh redy all his gere,
And on a hors the sak he cast anon :
Forth goth Alein the clerk, and also John,
With good swerd and with bokeler by hir side.
John knew the way, him neded not no guide,
And at the mille the sak adoun he laith.
Alein spake first ; All haile, Simond, in faith,
How fares thy faire doughter, and thy wif ?
Alein, welcome (quod Simkin) by my lif,
And John also : how now, what do ye here ?
By God, Simond, (quod John) nede has no pere.
Him behoves serve himself that has na swain,
Or elles he is a fool, as clerkes sain.
Our manciple I hope he wol be ded,
Swa werkes ay the wanges in his hed :
And therfore is I come, and eke Alein,
To grind our corn and cary it hame agein :
I pray you spede us henen that ye may.
It shal be don (quod Simkin) by my fay.

›l ye don while that it is in hand?
right by the hopper wol I stand,
›hn) and seen how that the corn gas in.
I never by my fader kin,
t the hopper wagges til and fra.
answered; John, and wolt thou swa?
l I be benethe by my croun,
how that the mele falles adoun
: trogh, that shal be my disport:
ın, in faith I may ben of your sort;
l a miller as is ye.
›iller smiled at hir nicetee,
ıght, all this n'is don but for a wile.
nen that no man may hem begile,
ny thrift yet shal I blere hir eie,
he sleighte in hir philosophie.
e queinte knakkes that they make,
e wol I stele whan that I take.
of flour yet wol I yeve hem bren.
est clerkes ben not the wisest men,
›m to the wolf thus spake the mare:
r art ne count I not a tare.
the dore he goth ful prively,
ıat he saw his time, softely.
h up and doun, til he hath found
kes hors, ther as he stood ybound
he mille, under a levesell:
he hors he goth him faire and well,
peth of the bridel right anon.
'han the hors was laus, he gan to gon
the fen, ther wilde mares renne,
h, with wehee, thurgh thick and thinne
ler goth again, no word he said,
ı his note, and with these clerkes plaid,
hir corn was faire and wel yground.
ın the mele is sacked and ybound,
n goth out, and fint his hors away,
to crie, harow and wala wa!
ı is lost: Alein, for Goddes banes,
:hy feet; come of, man, al at anes:
ır wardein has his palfrey lorn.
ılein al forgat both mele and corn;
ut of his mind his husbandrie:
hilke way is he gon? he gan to crie.
if came leping inward at a renne,
; Alas! youre hors goth to the fenne
de mares, as fast as he may go.
come on his hand that bond him so,
:hat better shuld have knit the rein.
(quod John) Alein, for Christes pein
ı thy swerd, and I shal min alswa.
ıight, God wate, as is a ra.
es saule he shal not scape us bathe.
had thou put the capel in the lathe?
Alein, by God thou is a fonne.
sely clerkes han ful fast yronne
the fen, bothe Alein and eke John:
ın the miller saw that they were gon,
ı bushel of hir flour hath take,
his wif go knede it in a cake.
; I trow, the clerkes were aferde.
a miller make a clerkes berde,
ıis art. Ye, let hem gon hir way.
they gon. Ye, let the children play:
him not so lightly by my croun.
sely clerkes rennen up and doun
›e, kepe; stand, stand; jossa, warderere.
le thou, and I shal kepe him here.
'tly, til that it was veray night
ıde not, though they did ail hir might,
Hir capel catch, he ran alway so fast:
Til in a diche they caught him at the last.
Wery and wet, as bestes in the rain,
Cometh sely John, and with him cometh Alein.
Alas (quod John) the day that I was borne!
Now are we driven til hething and til scorne.
Our corn is stolne, men wol us fonnes calle,
Both the wardein, and eke our felawes alle,
And namely the miller, wala wa!
Thus plaineth John, as he goth by the way
Toward the mille, and bayard in his hond.
The miller sitting by the fire he fond,
For it was night, and forther might they nought,
But for the love of God they him besought
Of herberwe and of ese, as for hir peny.
The miller saide agen, if ther be any,
Swiche as it is, yet shull ye have your part.
Myn hous is streit, but ye have lerned art;
Ye can by arguments maken a place
A mile brode, of twenty foot of space.
Let see now if this place may suffice,
Or make it roume with speche, as is your gise.
Now, Simond, (said this John) by Seint Cuthberd
Ay is thou mery, and that is faire answerd.
I have herd say, man sal take of twa thinges,
Slike as he findes, or slike as he bringes.
But specially I pray thee, hoste dere,
Gar us have mete and drinke, and make us chere,
And we sal paien trewely at the full:
With empty hand, men may na haukes tull.
Lo here our silver redy for to spend.
This miller to the toun his doughter send
For ale and bred, and rosted hem a goos,
And bond hir hors, he shuld no more go loos:
And in his owen chambre hem made a bedde,
With shetes and with chalons faire yspredde,
Nat from his owen bed ten foot or twelve:
His doughter had a bed all by hireselve,
Right in the same chambre by and by:
It mighte be no bet, and cause why,
Ther was no roumer herberwe in the place.
They soupen, and they speken of solace,
And drinken ever strong ale at the best.
Abouten midnight wente they to rest.
Wel hath this miller vernished his hed,
Ful pale he was, for-dronken, and nought red.
He yoxeth, and he speketh thurgh the nose,
As he were on the quakke, or on the pose.
To bed he goth, and with him goth his wif;
As any jay she light was and jolif,
So was hire joly whistle wel ywette.
The cradel at hire beddes feet was sette,
To rocken, and to yeve the child to souke.
And whan that dronken was all in the crouke
To bedde wente the doughter right anon,
To bedde goth Alein, and also John.
Ther n'as no more; nedeth hem no dwale.
This miller hath so wisly bibbed ale,
That as an hors he snorteth in his slepe,
Ne of his tail behind he toke no kepe.
His wif bare him a burdon a ful strong;
Men might hir routing heren a furlong.
The wenche routeth eke *par compaynie*.
Alein the clerk that herd this melodie,
He poketh John, and sayde: Slepest thou?
Herdest thou ever slike a song er now?
Lo whilke a complin is ymell hem alle.
A wilde fire upon hir bodies falle,
Wha herkned ever slike a ferly thing?
Ye, they shall have the flour of yvel ending.

This lange night ther tides me no reste.
But yet na force, all shal be for the beste.
For, John, (sayd he) as ever mote I thrive,
If that I may, yon wenche wol I swive.
Som esement has lawe yshapen us.
For, John, ther is a lawe that saieth thus,
That if a man in o point be agreved,
That in another he shal be releved.
Our corn is stoine, sothly it is na nay,
And we han had an yvel fit to-day.
And sin I shal have nan amendement
Again my losse, I wol have an esement:
By Goddes saule, it shal nan other be.
This John answered; Alein, avise thee:
The miller is a perilous man, he sayde.
And if that he out of his slepe abraide,
He mighte don us bathe a vilanie.
Alein answered; I count him nat a flie.
And up he rist, and by the wenche he crept.
This wenche lay upright, and faste slept,
Til he so nigh was, er she might espie,
That it had ben to late for to crie:
And shortly for to say, they were at on.
Now play, Alein, for I wol speke of John.
This John lith still a furlong way or two,
And to himself he maketh routh and wo.
Alas! (quod he) this is a wicked jape;
Now may I say, that I is but an ape.
Yet has my felaw somwhat for his harme;
He has the millers doughter in his arme:
He auntred him, and hath his nedes spedde,
And I lie as a draf-sak in my bedde;
And whan this jape is tald another day,
I shal be halden a daffe or a cokenay:
I wol arise, and auntre it by my fay:
Unhardy is unsely, thus men say.
And up he rose, and softely he went
Unto the cradel, and in his hand it hent,
And bare it soft unto his beddes fete.
Sone after this the wif hire routing lete,
And gan awake, and went hire out to pisse,
And came again, and gan the cradel misse,
And groped here and ther, but she fond non.
Alas! (quod she) I had almost misgon.
I had almost gon to the clerkes bedde.
Ey *benedicite*, than had I foule yspedde.
And forth she goth, til she the cradel fond.
She gropeth alway forther with hire hond,
And fond the bed, and thoughte nat but good,
Because that the cradel by it stood,
And n'iste wher she was, for it was derk,
But faire and wel she crept in by the clerk,
And lith ful still, and wold han caught a slepe.
Within a while this John the clerk up lepe,
And on this goode wif he laieth on sore;
So mery a fit ne had she nat ful yore.
He priketh hard and depe, as he were mad.
This joly lif han these two clerkes lad,
Til that the thridde cok began to sing.
Alein wex werie in the morwening,
For he had swonken all the longe night,
And sayd; Farewel, Malkin, my swete wight.
The day is come, I may no longer bide,
But evermo, wher so I go or ride,
I is thin awen clerk, so have I hele.
Now, dere lemman, quod she, go farewele:
But or thou go, o thing I wol thee tell.
Whan that thou wendest homeward by the mell,
Right at the entree of the dore behind
Thou shalt a cake of half a bushel find,
That was ymaked of thin owen mele,
Which that I halpe my fader for to stele.
And goode lemman, God thee save and kepe.
And with that word she gan almost to wepe.
Alein uprist and thought, er that it daw
I wol go crepen in by my felaw:
And fond the cradel at his hand anon.
By God, thought he, all wrang I have misgon:
My hed is tottie of my swink to-night,
That maketh me that I go nat aright.
I wot wel by the cradel I have misgo;
Here lith the miller and his wif also.
And forth he goth a twenty divel way
Unto the bed, ther as the miller lay.
He wend have cropen by his felaw John,
And by the miller in he crept anon,
And caught him by the nekke, and gan him shak
And sayd; Thou John, thou swineshed awake
For Cristes saule, and here a noble game:
For by that lord that called is Seint Jame,
As I have thries as in this short night
Swived the millers doughter bolt-upright,
While thou hast as a coward ben agast.
Ye, false harlot, quod the miller, hast?
A false traitour, false clerk, (quod he)
Thou shalt be ded by Goddes dignitee,
Who dorste be so bold to disparage
My doughter, that is come of swiche linage.
And by the throte-bolle he caught Alein,
And he him hent despitously again,
And on the nose he smote him with his fist;
Doun ran the blody streme upon his brest:
And in the flore with nose and mouth to-broke
They walwe, as don two pigges in a poke.
And up they gon, and doun again anon,
Til that the miller sporned at a ston,
And doun he fell backward upon his wif,
That wiste nothing of this nice strif:
For she was fall aslepe a litel wight
With John the clerk, that waked had all night:
And with the fall out of hire slepe she braide.
Helpe, holy crois of Bromeholme, (she sayde)
In manus tuas, Lord, to thee I call.
Awake, Simond, the fend is on me fall;
Myn herte is broken; helpe; I n'am but ded;
Ther lith on up my wombe and up myn hed.
Helpe, Simkin, for the false clerkes fight.
This John stert up as fast as ever he might,
And graspeth by the walles to and fro
To find a staf, and she stert up also,
And knew the estres bet than did this John,
And by the wall she toke a staf anon:
And saw a litel shemering of a light,
For at an hole in shone the mone bright,
And by that light she saw hem bothe two,
But sikerly she n'iste who was who,
But as she saw a white thing in hire eye.
And whan she gan this white thing espie,
She wend the clerk had wered a volupere;
And with the staf she drow ay nere and nere,
And wend han hit this Alein atte full,
And smote the miller on the pilled skull,
That doun he goth, and cried, harow! I die.
Thise clerkes bete him wel, and let him lie,
And greithen hem, and take hir hors anon,
And eke hir mele, and on hir way they gon:
And at the mille dore eke they toke hir cake
Of half a bushel flour, ful wel ybake.
Thus is the proude miller wel ybete,
And hath ylost the grinding of the whete,

ied for the souper every del
n and of John, that bete him wel;
' is swived, and his doughter als;
che it is a miller to be fals.
erfore this proverbe is sayd ful soth,
Him thar not winnen wel that evil doth;
A gilour shal himself begiled be:
And God that siteth hie in magestee
Save all this compagnie, gret and smale.
Thus have I quit the miller in my tale.

THE COKES TALE.

THE COKES PROLOGUE

ke of London, while the Reve spake,
e (him thought) he clawed him on the bak:
quod he) for Cristes passion,
iller had a sharpe conclusion,
his argument of herbergage.
yde Salomon in his langage,
ng not every man into thin hous,
rberwing by night is perilous.
ght a man avised for to be
that he brought into his privetee.
to God so yeve me sorwe and care,
, sithen I highte Hodge of Ware,
a miller bet ysette a-werk;
l a jape of malice in the derk.
God forbede that we stinten here,
erfore if ye vouchen sauf to here
of me that am a poure man,
ou tell as wel as ever I can
jape that fell in our citee.
Hoste answerd and sayde; I grant it thee:
ll on, Roger, and loke that it be good,
any a pastee hast thou letten blood,
any a Jacke of Dover hast thou sold,
ath been twies hot and twies cold.
y a pilgrim hast thou Cristes curse,
thy persclee yet fare they the werse,
ey han eten in thy stoble goos:
thy shop goth many a flie loos.
ll on, gentil Roger by thy name,
t I pray thee be not wroth for game;
may say ful soth in game and piay.
sayst ful soth, quod Roger, by my fay;
h play *quade spel*, as the Fleming saith:
erfore, Herry Bailly, by thy faith,
not wroth, or we departen here,
that my tale be of an hostelere.
theles, I wol not telle it yet,
we part, ywis thou shalt be quit.
erwithal he lough and made chere,
yd his tale, as ye shul after here.

THE COKES TALE.

ris whilom dwelt in our citee,
a craft of vitaillers was he:
d he was, as goldfinch in the shawe,
as a bery, a propre short felawe:
kkes blake, kembed ful fetisly.
he coude so wel and jolily,
That he was cleped Perkin Revelour.
He was as ful of love and paramour,
As is the hive ful of hony swete;
Wel was the wenche with him mighte mete.
At every bridale would he sing and hoppe;
He loved bet the taverne than the shoppe.
For whan ther any riding was in Chepe,
Out of the shoppe thider wold he lepe,
And til that he had all the sight ysein,
And danced wel, he wold not come agein;
And gadred him a meinie of his sort,
To hoppe and sing, and maken swiche disport:
And ther they setten steven for to mete
To plaien at the dis in swiche a strete.
For in the toun ne was ther no prentis,
That fairer coude caste a pair of dis
Than Perkin coude, and therto he was fre
Of his dispence, in place of privetee.
That fond his maister wel in his chaffare,
For often time he fond his box ful bare.
For sothly, a prentis, a revelour,
That hanteth dis, riot and paramour,
His maister shal it in his shoppe abie,
Al have he no part of the minstralcie.
For theft and riot they ben convertible,
Al can they play on giterne or ribible.
Revel and trouth, as in a low degree,
They ben ful wroth all day, as men may see.
This joly prentis with his maister abode,
Til he was neigh out of his prentishode,
Al were he snibbed bothe erly and late,
And somtime lad with revel to Newgate.
But at the last his maister him bethought
Upon a day, whan he his paper sought,
Of a proverbe, that saith this same word;
Wel bet is roten appel out of hord,
Than that it rote alle the remenant:
So fareth it by a riotous servant;
It is wel lasse harm to let him pace,
Than he shende all the servants in the place.
Therfore his maister yaf him a quitance,
And bad him go, with sorwe and with meschance.
And thus this joly prentis had his leve:
Now let him riot all the night or leve.
And for ther n'is no thefe without a louke,
That helpeth him to wasten and to souke
Of that he briben can, or borwe may,
Anon he sent his bed and his array
Unto a compere of his owen sort,
That loved dis, and riot, and disport;
And had a wif, that held for contenance
A shoppe, and swived for hire sustenance.

* * * * *

THE MAN OF LAWES TALE.

THE MAN OF LAWES PROLOGUE.

Our Hoste saw wel, that the brighte sonne
The ark of his artificial day had ronne
The fourthe part, and half an houre and more;
And though he were not depe expert in lore,
He wiste it was the eighte and twenty day
Of April, that is messager to May;
And saw wel that the shadow of every tree
Was as in lengthe of the same quantitee
That was the body erect, that caused it;
And therfore by the shadow he toke his wit,
That Phebus, which that shone so clere and bright,
Degrees was five and fourty clombe on hight;
And for that day, as in that latitude,
It was ten of the clok, he gan conclude;
And sodenly he plight his hors aboute.
Lordings, quod he, I warne you all this route,
The fourthe partie of this day is gon.
Now for the love of God and of Seint John
Leseth no time, as ferforth as ye may.
Lordings, the time it wasteth night and day,
And steleth from us, what prively sleping,
And what thurgh negligence in our waking,
As doth the streme, that turneth never again,
Descending fro the montagne into a plain.
Wel can Senek and many a philosophre
Bewailen time, more than gold in coffre.
For losse of catel may recovered be,
But losse of time shendeth us, quod he.
It wol not come again withouten drede,
No more than wol Malkins maidenhede,
Whan she hath lost it in hire wantonnesse.
Let us not moulen thus in idlenesse.
Sire man of Lawe, quod he, so have ye blis,
Tell us a tale anon, as forword is.
Ye ben submitted thurgh your free assent
To stonde in this cas at my jugement.
Acquiteth you now, and holdeth your behest;
Than have ye don your devoir at the lest.
Hoste, quod he, *de par dieux jeo assente*,
To breken forword is not min entente.
Behest is dette, and I wold hold it fayn
All my behest, I can no better sayn.
For swiche lawe as man yeveth another wight,
He shuld himselven usen it by right.
Thus wol our text: but natheles certain
I can right now no thrifty tale sain,
But Chaucer (though he can but lewedly
On metres and on riming craftily)
Hath sayd hem, in swiche English as he can,
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man.
And if he have not sayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath sayd hem in another.
For he hath told of lovers up and doun,
Mo than Ovide made of mentioun
In his *Epistolis*, that ben ful olde.
What shuld I tellen hem, sin they ben tolde?
In youthe he made of Ceys and Alcyon,
And sithen hath he spoke of everich on
Thise noble wives, and thise lovers eke.
Who so that wol his large volume seke
Cleped the seintes legende of Cupide:
Ther may he se the large woundes wide
Of Lucrece, and of Babylon Thisbe;
The sword of Dido for the false Enee;
The tree of Phillis for hire Demophon;
The plaint of Deianire, and Hermion,
Of Adriane, and Ysiphilee;
The barreine ile stonding in the see;
The dreint Leandre for his fayre Hero;
The teres of Heleine, and eke the wo
Of Briseide, and of Ladomia;
The crueltee of thee, quene Medea,
Thy litel children hanging by the hals,
For thy Jason, that was of love so fals.
O Hipermestra, Penelope, Alceste,
Your wifhood he commendeth with the beste.
But certainly no word ne writeth he
Of thilke wicke ensample of Canace,
That loved hire owen brother sinfully;
(Of all swiche cursed stories I say fy)
Or elles of Tyrius Appolonius,
How that the cursed king Antiochus
Beraft his doughter of hire maidenhede,
That is so horrible a tale for to rede,
Whan he hire threw upon the pavement.
And therfore he of ful avisement
N'old never write in non of his sermons
Of swiche unkinde abhominations;
Ne I wol non reherse, if that I may.
But of my tale how shal I don this day?
Me were loth to be likened douteles
To Muses, that men clepe Pierides,
(*Metamorphoseos* wote what I mene)
But natheles I recche not a bene,
Though I come after him with hawebake,
I speke in prose, and let him rimes make.
And with that word, he with a sobre chere
Began his tale, and sayde, as ye shull here.

THE MAN OF LAWES TALE.

O scathful harm, condition of poverte,
With thirst, with cold, with hunger so confounded,
To asken helpe thee shameth in thin herte,
If thou non ask, so sore art thou ywounded,
That veray nede unwrappeth al thy wound hid.
Maugre thin hed thou must for indigence
Or stele, or begge, or borwe thy dispence.

Thou blamest Crist, and sayst ful bitterly,
He misdeparteth richesse temporal;
Thy neighebour thou witest sinfully,
And sayst, thou hast a litel, and he hath all:
Parfay (sayst thou) somtime he reken shall,
Whan that his tayl shal brennen in the glede,
For he nought helpeth needful in hir nede.

en what is the sentence of the wise,
o dien than have indigence.
ve neighebour wol thee despise,
be poure, farewel thy reverence.
the wise man take this sentence,
e dayes of poure men ben wicke,
therfore or thou come to that pricke.

ou be poure, thy brother hateth thee,
thy frendes fleen fro thee, alas!
marchants, ful of wele ben ye,
, o prudent folk, as in this cas,
agges ben not filled with ambes as,
h sis cink, that renneth for your chance;
tenmasse mery may ye dance.

ken lond and see for your winninges,
folk ye knowen all th'estat
es, ye ben fathers of tidinges,
es, both of pees and of debat:
right now of tales desolat,
hat a marchant, gon in many a yere,
ght a tale, which that ye shull here.

RRIE whilom dwelt a compagnie
men rich, and therto sad and trewe,
de where senten hir spicerie,
of gold, and satins riche of hewe.
ffare was so thriftly and so newe,
ery wight hath deintee to chaffare
em, and eke to sellen hem hir ware.

fell it, that the maisters of that sort
apen hem to Rome for to wende,
for chapmanhood or for disport,
ier message wold they thider sende,
nen hemself to Rome, this is the ende:
swiche place as thought hem avantage
entente, they taken hir herbergage.

rned han these marchants in that toun
in time, as fell to hir plesance:
befell, that the excellent renoun
emperoures doughter dame Custance
d was, with every circumstance,
ese Surrien marchants, in swiche wise
to day, as I shal you devise.

was the commun vois of every man:
perour of Rome, God him se,
iter hath, that sin the world began,
n as wel hire goodnesse as beaute,
ver swiche another as is she:
o God in honour hire sustene,
ld she were of all Europe the quene.

re is high beaute withouten pride,
, withouten grenehed or folie:
ire werkes vertue is hire guide;
sse hath slaien in hire tyrannie:
irrour of alle curtesie,
rte is veray chambre of holinesse,
nd ministre of fredom for almesse.

il this vois was soth, as God is trewe,
to purpos let us turne agein.
archants han don fraught hir shippes newe,
an they han this blisful maiden sein,
Surrie ben they went ful fayn,
hir nedes, as they han don yore,
en in wele, I can say you no more.

Now fell it, that these marchants stood in grace
Of him that was the Soudan of Surrie:
For whan they came from any strange place
He wold of his benigne curtesie
Make hem good chere, and besily espie
Tidings of sundry regnes, for to lere
The wonders that they mighte seen or here.

Amonges other thinges specially
These marchants han him told of dame Custance
So gret noblesse, in ernest seriously,
That this Soudan hath caught so gret plesance
To han hire figure in his remembrance,
That all his lust, and all his besy cure
Was for to love hire, while his lif may dure.

Paraventure in thilke large book,
Which that men clepe the heven, ywriten was
With sterres, whan that he his birthe took,
That he for love shuld han his deth, alas!
For in the sterres, clerer than is glas,
Is writen, God wot, who so coud it rede,
The deth of every man withouten drede.

In sterres many a winter therbeforn
Was writ the deth of Hector, Achilles,
Of Pompey, Julius, or they were born;
The strif of Thebes; and of Hercules,
Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates
The deth; but mennes wittes ben so dull,
That no wight can wel rede it at the full.

This Soudan for his prive councel sent,
And shortly of this matere for to pace,
He hath to hem declared his entent,
And sayd hem certain, but he might have grace
To han Custance, within a litel space,
He n'as but ded, and charged hem in hie
To shapen for his lif som remedie.

Diverse men, diverse thinges saiden;
They argumentes casten up and doun;
Many a subtil reson forth they laiden;
They speken of magike, and abusion;
But finally, as in conclusion,
They cannot seen in that non avantage,
Ne in non other way, save mariage.

Than saw they therin swiche difficultee
By way of reson, for to speke all plain,
Because ther was swiche diversitee
Betwene hir bothe lawes, that they sayn,
They trowen that no cristen prince wold fayn
Wedden his child under our lawe swete,
That us was yeven by Mahound our prophete.

And he answered: Rather than I lese
Custance, I wol be cristened douteles:
I mote ben hires, I may non other chese,
I pray you hold your arguments in pees,
Saveth my lif, and beth not reccheles
To getten hire that hath my lif in cure,
For in this wo I may not long endure.

What nedeth greter dilatation?
I say, by tretise and ambassatrie,
And by the popes mediation,
And all the chirche, and all the chevalrie,
That in destruction of Maumetrie,
And in encrese of Cristes lawe dere,
They ben accorded so as ye may here;

How that the Soudan and his baronage,
And all his lieges shuld ycristened be,
And he shal han Custance in mariage,
And certain gold, I no't what quantitee,
And hereto finden suffisant suretee.
The same accord is sworne on eyther side;
Now, fair Custance, almighty God thee gide.

Now wolden som men waiten, as I gesse,
That I shuld tellen all the purveiance,
The which that the emperour of his noblesse
Hath shapen for his doughter dame Custance.
Wel may men know that so gret ordinance
May no man tellen in a litel clause,
As was arraied for so high a cause.

Bishopes ben shapen with hire for to wende,
Lordes, ladies, and knightes of renoun,
And other folk ynow, this is the end.
And notified is thurghout al the toun,
That every wight with gret devotioun
Shuld prayen Crist, that he this mariage
Receive in gree, and spede this viage.

The day is comen of hire departing,
I say the woful day fatal is come,
That ther may be no longer tarying,
But forward they hem dressen all and some.
Custance, that was with sorwe all overcome,
Ful pale arist, and dresseth hire to wende,
For wel she seth ther n'is non other ende.

Alas! what wonder is it though she wept?
That shal be sent to straunge nation
Fro frendes, that so tendrely hire kept,
And to be bounde under subjection
Of on, she knoweth not his condition.
Housbondes ben all good, and han ben yore,
That knowen wives, I dare say no more.

Fader, (she said) thy wretched child Custance,
Thy yonge doughter, fostered up so soft,
And ye, my moder, my soveraine plesance
Over all thing, (out taken Crist on loft)
Custance your child hire recommendeth oft
Unto your grace; for I shal to Surrie,
Ne shal I never seen you more with eye.

Alas! unto the Barbare nation
I muste gon, sin that it is your will:
But Crist, that starfe for our redemption,
So yeve me grace his hestes to fulfill,
I wretched woman no force though I spill;
Women arn borne to thraldom and penance,
And to ben under mannes governance.

I trow at Troye whan Pirrus brake the wall,
Or Ilion brent, or Thebes the citee,
Ne at Rome for the harm thurgh Hanniball,
That Romans hath venqueshed times three,
N'as herd swiche tendre weping for pitee,
As in the chambre was for hire parting,
But forth she mote, wheder she wepe or sing.

O firste moving cruel firmament,
With thy diurnal swegh that croudest ay,
And hurtlest all from Est til Occident,
That naturally wold hold another way;
Thy crouding set the heven in swiche array
At the beginning of this fierce viage,
That cruel Mars hath slain this marriage.

Infortunat ascendent tortuous,
Of which the lord is helpeles fall, alas!
Out of his angle into the derkest hous.
O Mars, o Atyzar, as in this cas;
O feble Mone, unhappy ben thy pas,
Thou knittest thee ther thou art not received,
Ther thou were wel fro thennes art thou weived.

Imprudent emperour of Rome, alas!
Was ther no philosophre in al thy toun?
Is no time bet than other in swiche cas?
Of viage is ther non electioun,
Namely to folk of high conditioun,
Nat whan a rote is of a birth yknowe?
Alas! we ben to lewed, or to slow.

To ship is brought this woful faire maid
Solempnely, with every circumstance:
Now Jesu Crist be with you all, she said.
Ther n'is no more, but farewel fair Custance.
She peineth hire to make good countenance,
And forth I let hire sayle in this manere,
And turne I wol againe to my matere.

The mother of the Soudan, well of vices,
Espied hath hire sones pleine entente,
How he wol lete his olde sacrifices:
And right anon she for her conseil sente,
And they ben comen, to know what she mente,
And whan assembled was this folk in fere,
She set hire doun, and sayd as ye shul here.

Lordes, (she sayd) ye knowen everich on,
How that my sone in point is for to lete
The holy lawes of our Alkaron,
Yeven by Goddes messager Mahomete:
But on avow to grete God I hete,
The lif shal rather out of my body sterte,
Than Mahometes lawe out of myn herte.

What shuld us tiden of this newe lawe
But thraldom to our bodies and penance,
And afterward in helle to ben drawe,
For we reneied Mahound our creance?
But, lordes, wol ye maken assurance,
As I shal say, assenting to my lore?
And I shal make us sauf for evermore.

They sworen, and assented every man
To live with hire and die, and by hire stond:
And everich on, in the best wise he can,
To strengthen hire shal all his frendes fond.
And she hath this emprise ytaken in hond,
Which ye shull heren that I shal devise,
And to hem all she spake right in this wise.

We shul first feine us cristendom to take;
Cold water shal not greve us but a lite:
And I shal swiche a feste and revel make,
That, as I trow, I shal the Soudan quite.
For tho his wif be cristened never so white,
She shal have nede to wash away the rede,
Though she a font of water with hire lede.

O Soudannesse, rote of iniquitee,
Virago thou Semyramee the second,
O serpent under femininitee,
Like to the serpent depe in helle ybound:
O feined woman, all that may confound
Vertue and innocence, thurgh thy malice,
Is bred in thee, as nest of every vice.

ıan envious, sin thilke day
u were chased from our heritage,
west thou to woman the olde way.
dest Eva bring us in servage,
:t fordon this cristen mariage:
rument so (wala wa the while!)
hou of women whan thou wolt begile.

udannesse, whom I thus blame and warrie,
ly hire conseil gon hir way:
uld I in this tale longer tarie?
h to the Soudan on a day,
l him, that she wold reneie hire lay,
:endom of prestes hondes fong,
g hire she hethen was so long;

ing him to don hire that honour,
might han the cristen folk to fest:
ı hem I wol do my labour.
lan saith, I wol don at your hest,
ing, thanked hire of that request;
e was, he n'iste not what to say,
ıire sone, and home she goth hire way.

d ben these cristen folk to londe
:, with a gret solempne route,
ily this Soudan sent his sonde,
ıis mother, and all the regne aboute,
l, his wif was comen out of doute,
de hem for to riden again the quene,
ur of his regne to sustene.

as the presse, and riche was th'array
:ns and Romanes met in fere.
ıer of the Soudan riche and gay
hire with all so glad a chere,
ıother might hire doughter dere:
ıe nexte citee ther beside
as solempnely they ride.

t trow I, the triumph of Julius,
that Lucan maketh swiche a bost,
ler, or more curious,
ı th'assemblee of this blisful host:
s scorpion, this wicked gost,
lannesse, for all hire flattering
er this ful mortally to sting.

ıudan cometh himself sone after this
, that wonder is to tell:
:ometh hire with alle joye and blis.
ı in mirth and joye I let hem dwell.
of this matere is that I tell.
ne came, men thought it for the best
el stint, and men go to hir rest.

ne come is, this olde Soudannesse
hath the feste of which I tolde,
he feste cristen folk hem dresse
al, ya bothe yonge and olde.
y men fest and realtee beholde,
tees mo than I can you devise,
ɔ dere they bought it or they rise.

n wo, that ever art successour
ly blis, spreint is with bitternesse
of the joye of our worldly labour:
pieth the fyn of our gladnesse.
his conseil for thy sikernesse:
r glade day have in thy minde
are wo of harm, that cometh behinde.

For shortly for to tellen at a word,
The Soudan and the cristen everich on
Ben all to-hewe, and stiked at the bord,
But it were only dame Custance alone.
This olde Soudannesse, this cursed crone,
Hath with hire frendes don this cursed dede,
For she hireself wold all the contree lede.

Ne ther was Surrien non that was converted,
That of the conseil of the Soudan wot,
That he n'as all to-hewe, er he asterted:
And Custance han they taken anon fote-hot,
And in a ship all stereles (God wot)
They han hire set, and bidden hire lerne sayle
Out of Surrie againward to Itaille.

A certain tresor that she thither ladde,
And soth to sayn, vitaille gret plentee,
They han hire yeven, and clothes eke she hadde,
And forth she sayleth in the salte see:
O my Custance, ful of benignitee,
O emperoures yonge doughter dere,
He that is lord of fortune be thy stere.

She blesseth hire, and with ful pitous vois
Unto the crois of Crist thus sayde she,
O clere, o weleful auter, holy crois,
Red of the lambes blood ful of pitee,
That wesh the world fro the old iniquitee,
Me fro the fende, and fro his clawes kepe,
That day that I shal drenchen in the depe.

Victorious tree protection of trewe,
That only worthy were for to bere
The king of heven, with his woundes newe,
The white lamb, that hurt was with a spere;
Flemer of fendes, out of him and here
On which thy limmes faithfully extenden,
Me kepe, and yeve me might my lif to amenden.

Yeres and dayes fleet this creature
Thurghout the see of Grece, unto the straite
Of Maroc, as it was hire aventure:
On many a sory melo now may she baite,
After hire deth ful often may she waite,
Or that the wilde waves wol hire drive
Unto the place ther as she shal arive.

Men mighten asken, why she was not slain?
Eke at the feste who might hire body save?
And I answer to that demand again,
Who saved Daniel in the horrible cave,
Ther every wight, save he, master or knave,
Was with the leon frette, or he asterte?
No wight but God, that he bare in his herte.

God list to shew his wonderful miracle
In hire, for we shuld seen his mighty werkes:
Crist, which that is to every harm triacle,
By certain menes oft, as knowen clerkes,
Doth thing for certain ende, that ful derke is
To mannes wit, that for our ignorance
Ne can nat know his prudent purveiance.

Now sith she was not at the feste yslawe,
Who kepte hire fro the drenching in the see?
Who kepte Jonas in the fishes mawe,
Til he was spouted up at Ninivee?
Wel may men know, it was no wight but he
That kept the peple Ebraike fro drenching,
With drye feet thurghout the see passing.

Who bade the foure spirits of tempest,
That power han to anoyen lond and see,
Both north and south, and also west and est,
Anoyen neyther see, ne lond, ne tree?
Sothly the commander of that was he
That fro the tempest ay this woman kepte,
As wel whan she awoke as whan she slepte.

Wher might this woman mete and drinke have?
Three yere and more, how lasteth hire vitaille?
Who fed the Egyptian Mary in the cave
Or in desert? no wight but Crist *sans faille*.
Five thousand folk it was as gret marvaille
With loves five and fishes two to fede:
God sent his foyson at hire grete nede.

She driveth forth into our Ocean
Thurghout our wide see, til at the last
Under an hold, that nempnen I ne can,
Fer in Northumberlond, the wave hire cast,
And in the sand hire ship stiked so fast,
That thennes wolde it not in all a tide:
The wille of Crist was that she shulde abide.

The constable of the castle doun is fare
To seen this wrecke, and al the ship he sought,
And fond this wery woman ful of care;
He fond also the tresour that she brought:
In hire langage mercy she besought,
The lif out of hire body for to twinne,
Hire to deliver of wo that she was inne.

A maner Latin corrupt was hire speche,
But algate therby was she understonde.
The constable, whan him list no lenger seche,
This woful woman brought he to the londe.
She kneleth doun, and thanketh Goddes sonde;
But what she was, she wolde no man seye
For foule ne faire, though that she shulde deye.

She said, she was so mased in the see,
That she forgate hire minde, by hire trouth.
The constable hath of hir so gret pitee
And eke his wif, that they wepen for routh:
She was so diligent withouten slouth
To serve and plesen everich in that place,
That all hire love, that loken in hire face.

The constable and dame Hermegild his wif
Were payenes, and that contree every wher;
But Hermegild loved Custance as hire lif;
And Custance hath so long sojourned ther
In orisons, with many a bitter tere,
Til Jesu hath converted thurgh his grace
Dame Hermegild, constablesse of that place.

In all that lond no cristen dorste route;
All cristen folk ben fled fro that contree
Thurgh payenes, that conquereden all aboute
The places of the North by lond and see.
To Wales fled the cristianitee
Of olde Bretons, dwelling in this ile;
Ther was hir refuge for the mene while.

But yet n'ere cristen Bretons so exiled,
That ther n'ere som which in hir privitee
Honoured Crist, and hethen folk begiled;
And neigh the castle swiche ther dwelten three:
That on of hem was blind, and might not see,
But it were with thilke eyen of his minde,
With which men mowen see whan they ben blinde.

Bright was the sonne, as in that sommers day,
For which the constable and his wif also
And Custance, han ytake the righte way
Toward the see, a furlong way or two,
To plaien, and to romen to and fro;
And in hir walk this blinde man they mette,
Croked and olde, with eyen fast yshette.

In the name of Crist (cried this blinde Breton)
Dame Hermegild, yeve me my sight again.
This lady wexe afraied of that soun,
Lest that hire husbond, shortly for to sain,
Wold hire for Jesu Cristes love have slain,
Til Custance made hire bold, and bad hire werche
The will of Crist, as doughter of holy cherche.

The constable wexe abashed of that sight,
And sayde; What amounteth all this fare?
Custance answerd; Sire, it is Cristes might,
That helpeth folk out of the fendes snare;
And so ferforth she gan our lay declare,
That she the constable, er that it were eve,
Converted, and on Crist made him beleve.

This constable was not lord of the place
Of which I speke, ther as he Custance fond,
But kept it strongly many a winter space,
Under Alla, king of Northumberlond,
That was ful wise, and worthy of his hond
Againe the Scottes, as men may wel here;
But tourne I wol againe to my matere.

Sathan, that ever us waiteth to begile,
Saw of Custance all hire perfectioun,
And cast anon how he might quite hire while,
And made a yonge knight, that dwelt in that toun,
Love hire so hote of foule affectioun,
That verayly him thought that he shuld spille,
But he of hire might ones han his wille.

He woeth hire, but it availeth nought,
She wolde do no sinne by no wey:
And for despit, he compassed his thought
To maken hire on shameful deth to dey.
He waiteth whan the constable is away,
And prively upon a night he crepte
In Hermegildes chambre while she slepte.

Wery, forwaked in hire orisons,
Slepeth Custance, and Hermegilde also.
This knight, thurgh Sathanas temptations,
All softely is to the bed ygo,
And cut the throte of Hermegilde atwo,
And layd the blody knif by dame Custance,
And went his way, ther God yeve him mischance.

Sone after cometh this constable home again,
And eke Alla, that king was of that lond,
And saw his wife despitously yslain,
For which ful oft he wept and wrong his hond;
And in the bed the blody knif he fond
By dame Custance, alas! what might she say?
For veray wo hire wit was all away.

To king Alla was told all this mischance,
And eke the time, and wher, and in what wise,
That in a ship was fonden this Custance,
As here before ye han herd me devise:
The kinges herte of pitee gan agrise,
Whan he saw so benigne a creature
Falle in disese and in misaventure.

ıe lamb toward his deth is brought,
is innocent beforn the king:
:night, that hath this treson wrought,
› in hond that she hath don this thing:
›s ther was gret murmuring
peple, and sayn they cannot gesse
ıd don so gret a wickednesse.

han seen hire ever so vertuous,
Hermegild right as hire lif:
e witnesse everich in that hous,
ıt Hermegild slow with his knif:
king hath caught a gret motif
ıess, and thought he wold enquere
ıis cas, trouthe for to lere.

ıstance, thou hast no champion,
canst thou not, so wala wa!
: starf for our redemption,
Sathan, and yet lith ther he lay,
tronge champion this day:
Crist on thee miracle kithe,
gilt thou shalt be slaine as swithe.

ıire doun on knees, and thus she sayde;
God, that savedest Susanne
lame, and thou merciful mayde,
ne, doughter to seint Anne,
ıs child angels singen Osanne,
eles of this felonie,
be, or elles shal I die.

not seen somtime a pale face
›rees) of him that hath ben lad
deth, wher as he geteth no grace,
: a colour in his face hath had,
en know him that was so bestad,
ll the faces in that route,
ıstance, and loketh hire aboute.

ı living in prosperitee,
and ye ladies everich on,
ı routhe on hire adversitee;
ıures doughter stant alone;
o wight to whom to make hire mone;
ıl, that stondest in this drede,
y frendes in thy grete nede.

ı king hath swiche compassioun,
erte is fulfilled of pitee,
s eyen ran the water doun.
y do fecche a book, quod he;
knight wol sweren, how that she
ı slow, yet wol we us avise,
: we wol that shal ben our justice.

ı book, written with Evangiles,
ıd on this book he swore anon
as, and in the mene whiles
m smote upon the nekke bone,
he fell at ones as a stone:
ıis eyen brost out of his face
every body in that place.

as herd, in general audience,
Thou hast desclandred gilteles
er of holy chirche in high presence;
:hou don, and yet hold I my pees.
vaille agast was all the prees,
olk they stonden everich on
of wreche, save Custance alone.

Gret was the drede and eke the repentance
Of hem that hadden wronge suspection
Upon this sely innocent Custance;
And for this miracle, in conclusion,
And by Custances mediation,
The king, and many another in that place,
Converted was, thanked be Cristes grace.

This false knight was slain for his untrouthe
By jugement of Alla hastily;
And yet Custance had of his deth gret routhe;
And after this Jesus of his mercy
Made Alla wedden ful solempnely
This holy woman, that is so bright and shene,
And thus hath Crist ymade Custance a quene.

But who was woful (if I shal not lie)
Of this wedding but Donegild and no mo,
The kinges mother, ful of tyrannie?
Hire thoughte hire cursed herte brast atwo;
She wolde not that hire sone had do so;
Hire thoughte a despit, that he shulde take
So strange a creature unto his make.

Me list not of the chaf ne of the stre
Maken so long a tale, as of the corn.
What shulde I tellen of the realtee
Of this mariage, or which cours goth beforn,
Who bloweth in a trompe or in an horn?
The fruit of every tale is for to say;
They ete and drinke, and dance, and sing, and play.

They gon to bed, as it was skill and right,
For though that wives ben ful holy thinges,
They mosten take in patience a night
Swiche maner necessaries, as ben plesinges
To folk that han ywedded hem with ringes,
And lay a lite hir holinesse aside
As for the time, it may no bet betide.

On hire he gat a knave childe anon,
And to a bishop, and his constable eke
He toke his wif to kepe, whan he is gon
To Scotland ward, his fomen for to seke.
Now faire Custance, that is so humble and meke,
So long is gon with childe til that still
She halt hire chambre, abiding Cristes will.

The time is come, a knave child she bere;
Mauricius at the fontstone they him calle.
This constable doth forth come a messager,
And wrote unto his king that cleped was Alle,
How that this blisful tiding is befalle,
And other tidings spedeful for to say.
He hath the lettre, and forth he goth his way.

This messager, to don his avantage,
Unto the kinges mother rideth swithe,
And salueth hire ful faire in his langage.
Madame, quod he, ye may be glad and blithe,
And thanken God an hundred thousand sithe;
My lady quene hath child, withouten doute,
To joye and blisse of all this regne aboute.

Lo here the lettre seled of this thing,
That I most bere in all the hast I may:
If ye wol ought unto your sone the king,
I am your servant bothe night and day.
Donegilde answerd, As now at this time nay;
But here I wol all night thou take thy rest,
To-morwe wol I say thee what me lest.

This messager drank sadly ale and wine,
And stolen were his lettres prively
Out of his box, while he slept as a swine;
And contrefeted was ful subtilly
Another lettre, wrought ful sinfully,
Unto the king directe of this matere
Fro his constable, as ye shal after here.

This lettre spake, the quene delivered was
Of so horrible a fendliche creature,
That in the castle non so hardy was
That any while dorste therein endure:
The mother was an elfe by aventure
Ycome, by charmes or by sorcerie,
And everich man hateth hire compagnie.

Wo was this king whan he this lettre had sein,
But to no wight he told his sorwes sore,
But of his owen hand he wrote again;
Welcome the sonde of Crist for evermore
To me, that am now lerned in this lore:
Lord, welcome be thy lust and thy plesance,
My lust I put all in thyn ordinance.

Kepeth this child, al be it foule or faire,
And eke my wif, unto min home coming:
Crist whan him list may senden me an heire,
More agreable than this to my liking.
This lettre he seled, prively weping,
Which to the messager was taken sone,
And forth he goth, ther is no more to done.

O messager, fulfilled of dronkenesse,
Strong is thy breth, thy limmes faltren ay,
And thou bewreiest alle secrenesse;
Thy mind is lorne, thou janglest as a jay;
Thy face is tourned in a new array;
Ther dronkenesse regneth in any route,
Ther is no conseil hid withouten doute.

O Donegild, I ne have non English digne
Unto thy malice, and thy tirannie:
And therfore to the fende I thee resigne,
Let him enditen of thy traitorie.
Fy mannish, fy; o nay by God I lie;
Fy fendliche spirit, for I dare wel telle,
Though thou here walke, thy spirit is in helle.

This messager cometh fro the king again,
And at the kinges modres court he light,
And she was of this messager ful fayn,
And plesed him in all that ever she might.
He dranke, and wel his girdel underpight;
He slepeth, and he snoreth in his gise
All night, until the sonne gan arise.

Eft were his lettres stolen everich on,
And contrefeted lettres in this wise.
The king commanded his constable anon
Up peine of hanging and of high jewise,
That he ne shulde soffren in no wise
Custance within his regne for to abide
Three daies, and a quarter of a tide;

But in the same ship as he hire fond,
Hire and hire yonge sone, and all hire gere
He shulde put, and croude hire fro the lond,
And charge hire, that she never eft come there.
O my Custance, wel may thy ghost have fere,
And sleping in thy dreme ben in penance,
Whan Donegild cast all this ordinance.

This messager on morwe whan he awoke,
Unto the castel halt the nexte way;
And to the constable he the lettre toke;
And whan that he this pitous lettre sey,
Ful oft he sayd alas, and wala wa;
Lord Crist, quod he, how may this world endure!
So ful of sinne is many a creature.

O mighty God, if that it be thy will,
Sin thou art rightful juge, how may it be
That thou wolt soffren innocence to spill,
And wicked folk regne in prosperitee?
A good Custance, alas! so wo is me,
That I mote be thy turmentour, or dey
On shames deth, ther is non other wey.

Wepen both yong and old in al that place,
Whan that the king this cursed lettre sent:
And Custance with a dedly pale face
The fourthe day toward the ship she went:
But natheles she taketh in good entent
The will of Crist, and kneling on the strond
She sayde, Lord, ay welcome be thy sond.

He that me kepte fro the false blame,
While I was in the lond amonges you,
He can me kepe fro harme and eke fro shame
In the salt see, although I se not how:
As strong as ever he was, he is yet now,
In him trust I, and in his mother dere,
That is to me my sail and eke my stere.

Hire litel child lay weping in hire arm,
And kneling pitously to him she said,
Pees, litel sone, I wol do thee no harm·
With that hire couverchief of hire hed she braid,
And over his litel eyen she it laid,
And in hire arme she lulleth it ful fast,
And into the heven hire eyen up she cast.

Mother, quod she, and mayden bright Marie,
Soth is, that thurgh womannes eggement
Mankind was lorne, and damned ay to die,
For which thy child was on a crois yrent:
Thy blisful eyen saw all his turment,
Than is ther no comparison betwene
Thy wo, and any wo man may sustene.

Thou saw thy child yslain before thin eyen,
And yet now liveth my litel child parfay:
Now, lady bright, to whom all woful crien,
Thou glory of womanhed, thou faire may,
Thou haven of refute, bright sterre of day,
Rew on my child, that of thy gentillesse
Rewest on every rewful in distresse.

O litel child, alas! what is thy gilt,
That never wroughtest sinne as yet parde?
Why wol thin harde father have thee spilt?
O mercy, dere constable, (quod she)
As let my litel child dwell here with thee:
And if thou darst not saven him fro blame,
So kisse him ones in his fadres name.

Therwith she loketh backward to the lond,
And saide; Farewel, housbond routheles!
And up she rist, and walketh doun the strond
Toward the ship, hire foloweth all the prees:
And ever she praieth hire child to hold his pees,
And taketh hire leve, and with an holy entent
She blesseth hire, and into the ship she went.

.ed was the ship, it is no drede,
ıntly for hire a ful long space :
er necessaries that shuld nede
ynow, heried be Goddes grace :
l and wether, almighty God purchace,
ıg hire home, I can no better say,
ıe see she driveth forth hire way.

he king cometh home sone after this
castel, of the which I told,
eth wher his wif and his child is ;
ıtable gan about his herte cold,
nly all the matere he him told
n herd, I can tell it no better,
wed the king his sele and his letter ;

ayde ; Lord, as ye commanded me
› of deth, so have I don certain.
sager turmented was, til he
ıknowe, and tellen plat and plain,
.t to night in what place he had lain .
s by wit and subtil enquering
l was by whom this harm gan spring.

and was knowen that the lettre wrote,
the venime of this cursed dede ;
hat wise, certainly I n'ot.
:t is this, that Alla out of drede
er slew, that moun men plainly rede,
she traitour was to hire ligeance :
leth this old Donegild with meschance.

ırwe that this Alla night and day
for his wif and for his child also,
ıo tonge that it tellen may.
wol I agen to Custance go,
eth in the see in peine and wo
e and more, as liked Cristes sonde,
ıire ship approched to the londe.

' an hethen castel at the last,
h the name in my text I not find)
: and eke hire child the see up cast.
r God, that saved all mankind,
Custance and on hire child som mind,
en is in hethen hond eftsone
to spill, as I shal tell you sone.

fro the castel cometh ther many a wight
ın on this ship, and on Custance :
tly fro the castel on a night,
es steward (God yeve him meschance)
that had reneyed our creance,
ıo the ship alone, and said, he wolde
ıman be, whether she wolde or n'olde.

as this wretched woman tho begon,
lde cried, and she cried pitously :
'ul Mary halpe hire right anon,
ı hire strogling wel and mightily
:f fell over bord al sodenly,
he see he drenched for vengeance,
s hath Crist unwemmed kept Custance.

e lust of luxurie, lo thin ende,
that thou faintest mannes mind,
ıily thou wolt his body shende.
of thy werk, or of thy lustes blind,
aining : how many may men find,
for werk somtime, but for th'entent
his sinne, ben other slain or shent.

How may this weke woman han the strength
Hire to defend again this renegate ?
O Golias, unmesurable of length,
How mighte David maken thee so mate ?
So yonge, and of armure so desolate,
How dorst he loke upon thy dredful face ?
Wel may men seen it was but Goddes grace.

Who yaf Judith corage or hardinesse
To sleen him Holofernes in his tent,
And to deliver out of wretchednesse
The peple of God ? I say for this entent,
That right as God spirit of vigour sent
To hem, and saved hem out of meschance,
So sent he might and vigour to Custance.

Forth goth hire ship thurghout the narwe mouth
Of Jubaltare and Septe, driving alway,
Somtime West, and somtime North and South,
And somtime Est, ful many a wery day :
Til Cristes moder (blessed be she ay)
Hath shapen thurgh hire endeles goodnesse
To make an end of all hire hevinesse.

Now let us stint of Custance but a throw,
And speke we of the Romane emperour,
That out of Surrie hath by lettres knowe
The slaughter of cristen folk, and dishonour
Don to his doughter by a false traitour,
I mene the cursed wicked Soudannesse,
That at the fest let sleen both more and lesse.

For which this emperour hath sent anon
His senatour, with real ordinance,
And other lordes, God wote, many on,
On Surriens to taken high vengeance :
They brennen, sleen, and bring hem to meschance
Ful many a day : but shortly this is th'ende,
Homward to Rome they shapen hem to wende.

This senatour repaireth with victorie
To Rome ward sayling ful really,
And met the ship driving, as saith the storie,
In which Custance sitteth ful pitously :
Nothing ne knew he what she was, ne why
She was in swiche array, ne she wil sey
Of hire estat, though that she shulde dey.

He bringeth hire to Rome, and to his wif
He yaf hire, and hire yonge sone also :
And with the senatour she lad hire lif.
Thus can our lady bringen out of wo
Woful Custance, and many another mo :
And longe time dwelled she in that place,
In holy werkes ever, as was hire grace.

The senatoures wif her aunte was,
But for all that she knew hire never the more :
I wol no longer tarien in this cas,
But to king Alla, which I spake of yore,
That for his wif wepeth and siketh sore,
I wol returne, and let I wol Custance
Under the senatoures governance.

King Alla, which that had his moder slain,
Upon a day fell in swiche repentance,
That if I shortly tellen shal and plain,
To Rome he cometh to receive his penance,
And putte him in the popes ordinance
In high and low, and Jesu Crist besought,
Foryeve his wicked werkes that he had wrought.

The fame anon thurghout the toun is born,
How Alla king shal come on pilgrimage,
By herbergeours that wenten him beforn,
For which the senatour, as was usage,
Rode him againe, and many of his linage,
As wel to shewen his high magnificence,
As to don any king a reverence.

Gret chere doth this noble senatour
To king Alla, and he to him also;
Everich of hem doth other gret honour;
And so befell, that in a day or two
This senatour is to king Alla go
To fest, and shortly, if I shal not lie,
Custances sone went in his compagnie.

Som men wold sain at requeste of Custance
This senatour hath lad this child to feste:
I may not tellen every circumstance,
Be as be may, ther was he at the leste:
But soth is this, that at his mothers heste
Beforn Alla, during the metes space,
The child stood, loking in the kinges face.

This Alla king hath of this child gret wonder,
And to the senatour he said anon,
Whos is that faire child that stondeth yonder?
I no't, quod he, by God and by Seint John;
A moder he hath, but fader hath he non,
That I of wote: but shortly in a stound
He told Alla how that this child was found.

But God wot, quod this senatour also,
So vertuous a liver in all my lif
Ne saw I never, as she, ne herd of mo
Of worldly woman, maiden, widewe or wif:
I dare wel sayn hire hadde lever a knif
Thurghout hire brest, than ben a woman wikke,
Ther is no man coude bring hire to that prikke.

Now was this child as like unto Custance
As possible is a creature to be:
This Alla hath the face in remembrance
Of dame Custance, and theron mused he,
If that the childes moder were aught she
That is his wif, and prively he sighte,
And sped him fro the table that he mighte.

Parfay, thought he, fantome is in min hed.
I ought to deme of skilful jugement,
That in the salte see my wif is ded.
And afterward he made his argument;
What wot I, if that Crist have hider sent
My wif by see, as wel as he hire lent
To my contree, fro thennes that she went?

And after noon home with the senatour
Goth Alla, for to see this wonder chance.
This senatour doth Alla gret honour,
And hastily he sent after Custance:
But trusteth wel, hire luste not to dance.
Whan that she wiste wherfore was that sonde,
Unnethe upon hire feet she mighte stonde.

Whan Alla saw his wif, faire he hire grette,
And wept, that it was routhe for to see,
For at the firste look he on hire sette
He knew wel veraily that it was she:
And she for sorwe, as domb stant as a tree:
So was hire herte shette in hire distresse,
Whan she remembered his unkindenesse.

Twies she swouneth in his owen sight,
He wepeth and him excuseth pitously:
Now God, quod he, and all his halwes bright
So wisly on my soule as have mercy,
That of youre harme as gilteles am I,
As is Maurice my sone, so like your face,
Elles the fend me fetche out of this place.

Long was the sobbing and the bitter peine,
Or that hir woful hertes mighten cese,
Gret was the pitee for to here hem pleine,
Thurgh whiche pleintes gan hir wo encrese.
I pray you all my labour to relese,
I may not tell hir wo until to-morwe,
I am so wery for to speke of sorwe.

But finally, whan that the soth is wist,
That Alla gilteles was of hire wo,
I trow an hundred times han they kist,
And swiche a blisse is ther betwix hem two,
That save the joye that lasteth evermo,
Ther is non like, that any creature
Hath seen or shal, while that the world may dure.

Tho praied she hire husbond mekely
In releef of hire longe pitous pine,
That he wold pray hire fader specially,
That of his magestee he wold encline
To vouchesauf som day with him to dine:
She praied him eke, he shulde by no way
Unto hire fader no word of hire say.

Som men wold sayn, how that the child Maurice
Doth this message until this emperour:
But as I gesse, Alla was not so nice,
To him that is so soveraine of honour,
As he that is of cristen folk the flour,
Send any child, but it is bet to deme
He went himself, and so it may wel seme.

This emperour hath granted gentilly
To come to dinner, as he him besoughte:
And wel rede I, he loked besily
Upon this child, and on his doughter thought.
Alla goth to his inne, and as him ought
Arraied for this feste in every wise,
As ferforth as his conning may suffice.

The morwe came, and Alla gan him dresse,
And eke his wif, this emperour to mete:
And forth they ride in joye and in gladnesse,
And whan she saw hire fader in the strete,
She light adoun and falleth him to fete.
Fader, quod she, your yonge child Custance
Is now ful clene out of your remembrance.

I am your doughter, your Custance, quod she,
That whilom ye han sent into Surrie;
It am I, fader, that in the salte see
Was put alone, and dampned for to die.
Now, goode fader, I you mercy crie,
Send me no more into non hethenesse,
But thanketh my lord here of his kindenesse.

Who can the pitous joye tellen all
Betwix hem thre, sin they ben thus ymette?
But of my tale make an ende I shal,
The day goth fast, I wol no longer lette.
Thise glade folk to dinner ben ysette,
In joy and blisse at mete I let hem dwell,
A thousand fold wel more than I can tell.

child Maurice was sithen emperour
r the pope, and lived cristenly,
tes chirche did he gret honour:
t all his storie passen by,
ance is my tale specially,
lde Romane gestes men may find
s lif, I bere it not in mind.

king Alla, whan he his time sey,
s Custance, his holy wif so swete,
lond ben they come the righte wey,
they live in joye and in quiete.
l while it lasteth I you hete,
this world for time wol not abide,
to night it changeth as the tide.

lived ever in swiche delite o day,
n ne meved other conscience,
r talent, or som kin affray,
r pride, or passion, or offence?
but for this end this sentence,
l while in joye or in plesance
the blisse of Alla with Custance.

For deth, that taketh of hie and low his rente,
Whan passed was a yere, even as I gesse,
Out of this world this king Alla he hente,
For whom Custance hath ful gret hevinesse.
Now let us praien God his soule blesse:
And dame Custance, finally to say,
Toward the toun of Rome goth hire way.

To Rome is come this holy creature,
And findeth ther hire frendes hole and sound:
Now is she scaped all hire aventure:
And whan that she hire fader hath yfound,
Doun on hire knees falleth she to ground,
Weping for tendernesse in herte blithe
She herieth God an hundred thousand sithe.

In vertue and in holy almesse dede
They liven alle, and never asonder wende;
Till deth departeth hem, this lif they lede:
And fareth now wel, my tale is at an ende.
Now Jesu Crist, that of his might may sende
Joye after wo, governe us in his grace,
And kepe us alle that ben in this place.

THE WIF OF BATHES TALE.

E WIF OF BATHES PROLOGUE.

ence, though non auctoritee
this world, is right ynough for me
e of wo that is in mariage:
dings, sin I twelf yere was of age,
d be God that is eterne on live)
des at chirche dore have I had five,
often might han wedded be)
were worthy men in hir degree.
ne was told, not longe time agon is,
hen Crist ne went never but onis
ling, in the Cane of Galilee,
that ilke ensample taught he me,
ne shulde wedded be but ones.
e eke, which a sharpe word for the nones,
welle Jesu, God and man,
reprefe of the Samaritan:
st yhadde five husbonds, sayde he;
lke man, that now hath wedded thee,
yn husbond: thus said he certain;
at he ment therby, I can not sain.
t I aske, why that the fifthe man
n husbond to the Samaritan?
ny might she have in mariage?
d I never tellen in min age
is noumbre diffinitioun;
y devine, and glosen up and doun.
vel I wot, expresse withouten lie
l us for to wex and multiplie;
ntil text can I wel understond.
I wot, he sayd, that min husbond
ve fader and moder, and take to me;
o noumbre mention made he,
nie or of octogamie;
uld men than speke of it vilanie?

Lo here the wise King Dan Salomon,
I trow he hadde wives mo than on,
(As wolde God it leful were to me
To be refreshed half so oft as he)
Which a gift of God had he for alle his wives!
No man hath swiche, that in this world on live is.
God wot, this noble king, as to my witte,
The firste night had many a mery fitte
With eche of hem, so wel was him on live.
Blessed be God that I have wedded five,
Welcome the sixthe whan that ever he shall.
For sith I wol not kepe me chaste in all,
Whan min husbond is fro the world ygon,
Som cristen man shal wedden me anon.
For than the apostle saith, that I am fre
To wedde, a' goddes half, wher it liketh me.
He saith, that to be wedded is no sinne;
Better is to be wedded than to brinne.
What rekketh me though folk say vilanie
Of shrewed Lamech, and his bigamie?
I wot wel Abraham was an holy man,
And Jacob eke, as fer as ever I can,
And eche of hem had wives mo than two,
And many another holy man also.
Wher can ye seen in any maner age
That highe God defended mariage
By expresse word? I pray you telleth me,
Or wher commanded he virginitee?
I wot as wel as ye, it is no drede,
The apostle, whan he spake of maidenhede,
He said, that precept therof had he non:
Men may conseille a woman to ben on,
But conseilling is no commandement;
He put it in our owen jugement.
For hadde God commanded maidenhede,
Than had he dampned wedding out of drede;
And certes, if ther were no sede ysowe,
Virginitee than wherof shuld it growe?

Poule dorste not commanden at the lest
A thing, of which his maister yaf non hest.
The dart is sette up for virginitee,
Catch who so may, who renneth best let see.
But this word is not take of every wight,
But ther as God wol yeve it of his might.
I wot wel that the apostle was a maid,
But natheles, though that he wrote and said,
He wold that every wight were swiche as he,
All n'is but conseil to virginitee.
And for to ben a wif he yaf me leve,
Of indulgence, so n'is it non repreve
To wedden me, if that my make die,
Withoute exception of bigamie;
All were it good no woman for to touche,
(He ment as in his bed or in his couche)
For peril is both fire and tow to assemble;
Ye know what this ensample may resemble.
This is all and som, he held virginitee
More parfit than wedding in freeltee:
(Freeltee clepe I, but if that he and she
Wold lede hir lives all in chastitee)
I graunt it wel, I have of non envie,
Who maidenhed preferre to bigamie;
It liketh hem to be clene in body and gost:
Of min estat I wol not maken bost.
For wel ye know, a lord in his houshold
Ne hath nat every vessell all of gold:
Som ben of tree; and don hir lord service.
God clepeth folk to him in sondry wise,
And everich hath of God a propre gift,
Som this, som that, as that him liketh shift.
Virginitee is gret perfection,
And continence eke with devotion:
But Crist, that of perfection is welle,
Ne bade not every wight he shulde go selle
All that he had, and yeve it to the poure,
And in swiche wise folow him and his lore:
He spake to hem that wold live parfitly,
And, lordings, (by your leve) that am nat I;
I wol bestow the flour of all myn age
In th' actes and the fruit of mariage.
Tell me also, to what conclusion
Were membres made of generation,
And of so parfit wise a wight ywrought?
Trusteth me wel, they were nat made for nought.
Glose who so wol, and say bothe up and doun,
That they were made for purgatioun
Of urine, and of other thinges smale,
And eke to know a female from a male:
And for non other cause? say ye no?
The experience wot wel it is not so.
So that the clerkes be not with me wroth,
I say this, that they maked ben for both,
This is to sayn, for office, and for ese
Of engendrure, ther we not God displese.
Why shuld men elles in hir bookes sette,
That man shal yelden to his wif hire dette?
Now wherwith shuld he make his payement,
If he ne used his sely instrument?
Than were they made upon a creature
To purge urine, and eke for engendrure.
But I say not that every wight is hold,
That hath swiche harneis as I to you told,
To gon and usen hem in engendrure;
Than shuld men take of chastitee no cure.
Crist was a maide, and shapen as a man,
And many a seint, sith that this world began,
Yet lived they ever in parfit chastitee.
I n'ill envie with no virginitee.
Let hem with bred of pured whete be fed,
And let us wives eten barly bred.
And yet with barly bred, Mark tellen can,
Our Lord Jesu refreshed many a man.
In swiche estat as God hath cleped us,
I wol persever, I n'am not precious,
In wifhode wol I use min instrument
As frely as my maker hath it sent.
If I be dangerous God yeve me sorwe,
Min husbond shal it have both even and morwe,
Whan that him list come forth and pay his dette.
An husbond wol I have, I wol not lette,
Which shal be both my dettour and my thrall,
And have his tribulation withall
Upon his flesh, while that I am his wif.
I have the power during all my lif
Upon his propre body, and nat he;
Right thus the apostle told it unto me,
And bad our husbonds for to love us wel;
All this sentence me liketh every del.
Up stert the pardoner, and that anon;
Now, dame, quod he, by God and by Seint John,
Ye ben a noble prechour in this cas.
I was about to wed a wif, alas!
What? shuld I bie it on my flesh so dere?
Yet had I lever wed no wif to-yere.
Abide, quod she, my tale is not begonne.
Nay, thou shalt drinken of another tonne
Er that I go, shal savour worse than ale.
And whan that I have told thee forth my tale
Of tribulation in mariage,
Of which I am expert in all min age,
(This is to sayn, myself hath ben the whippe)
Than maiest thou chesen wheder thou wolt sippe
Of thilke tonne, that I shal abroche.
Beware of it, er thou to neigh approche.
For I shal tell ensamples mo than ten:
Who so that n'ill beware by other men
By him shal other men corrected be:
Thise same wordes writeth Ptholomee,
Rede in his Almageste, and take it there.
Dame, I wold pray you, if your will it were,
Sayde this pardoner, as ye began,
Tell forth your tale, and spareth for no man,
And techeth us yonge men of your practike.
Gladly, quod she, sin that it may you like.
But that I pray to all this compagnie,
If that I speke after my fantasie,
As taketh not a greefe of that I say,
For min entente is not but for to play.
Now, sires, than wol I tell you forth my tale.
As ever mote I drinken win or ale
I shal say soth, the husbondes that I had
As three of hem were good, and two were bad.
The three were goode men and riche and olde.
Unethes mighten they the statute holde,
In which that they were bounden unto me.
Ye wot wel what I mene of this parde.
As God me helpe, I laugh whan that I thinke,
How pitously a-night I made hem swinke,
But by my fay, I tolde of it no store:
They had me yeven hir lond and hir tresore,
Me neded not do lenger diligence
To win hir love, or don hem reverence.
They loved me so wel by God above,
That I ne tolde no deintee of hir love.
A wise woman wol besie hire ever in on
To geten hir love, ther as she hath non.
But sith I had hem holly in min hond,
And that they hadde yeven me all hir lond,

huld I taken kepe hem for to plese,
were for my profit, or min ese?
:m so a-werke by my fay,
any a night they songen wala wa.
con was not fet for hem, I trow,
m men have in Essex at Donmow.
ned hem so wel after my lawe,
:he of hem ful blisful was and fawe
igen me gay thinges fro the feyre.
ere ful glade whan I spake hem fayre,
d it wot, I chidde hem spitously.
erkeneth how I bare me proprely.
rise wives, that can understond,
ıul ye speke, and bere hem wrong on hond,
f so boldely can ther no man
and lien as a woman can.
not this by wives that ben wise,
t be whan they hem misavise.)
wif if that she can hire good,
ren hem on hond the cow is wood,
ken witnesse of hire owen mayd
assent: but herkeneth how I sayd.
olde kaynard, is this thin aray?
my neigheboures wif so gay?
honoured over al wher she goth,
home, I have no thrifty cloth.
lost thou at my neigheboures hous?
so faire? art thou so amorous?
ownest thou with our maide? *benedicite*,
le lechour, let thy japes be.
if I have a gossib, or a frend,
uten gilt) thou chidest as a fend,
I walke or play unto his hous.
ı comest home as dronken as a mous,
echest on thy benche, with evil prefe:
ayst to me, it is a gret meschiefe
l a poure woman, for costage:
that she be riche of high parage,
ayst thou, that it is a tourmentrie
re hire pride and hire melancolie.
that she be faire, thou veray knave,
ayst that every holour wol hire have.
ıy no while in chastitee abide,
assailed upon every side.
ayst som folk desire us for richesse,
r our shape, and som for our fairnesse,
m, for she can other sing or dance,
m for gentillesse and daliance,
r hire hondes and hire armes smale:
oth all to the devil by thy tale.
ayst, men may not kepe a castel wal,
so long assailled be over al.
that she be foul, thou sayst, that she
th every man that she may see;
a spaniel, she wol on him lepe,
may finden som man hire to chepe.
ı so grey goos goth ther in the lake,
yst thou) that wol ben withoute a make.
ıyst, it is an hard thing for to welde
g, that no man wol, his thankes, helde.
sayst thou, lorel, whan thou gost to bed,
ıat no wise man nedeth for to wed,
man that entendeth unto heven.
vilde thonder dint and firy leven
hy welked nekke be to-broke.
ı sayst, that dropping houses, and eke smoke,
ıiding wives maken men to flee
hir owen hous; a, *benedicite*,
ıileth swiche an old man for to chide?
ı sayst, we wives wol our vices hide,
Til we be fast, and than we wol hem shewe.
Wel may that be a proverbe of a shrewe.
Thou sayst, that oxen, asses, hors, and houndes,
They ben assaied at diverse stoundes,
Basines, lavoures, or that men hem bie,
Spones, stooles, and all swiche husbondrie,
And so ben pottes, clothes, and aray,
But folk of wives maken non assay,
Til they ben wedded, olde dotard shrewe!
And than, sayst thou, we wol our vices shewe.
Thou sayst also, that it displeseth me,
But if that thou wolt preisen my beautee,
And but thou pore alway upon my face,
And clepe me faire dame in every place;
And but thou make a feste on thilke day
That I was borne, and make me fresh and gay;
And but thou do to my norice honour,
And to my chamberere within my bour,
And to my faders folk, and myn allies;
Thus sayst thou, olde barel ful of lies.
And yet also of our prentis Jankin,
For his crispe here, shining as gold so fin,
And for he squiereth me both up and doun,
Yet hast thou caught a false suspection:
I wol him nat, though thou were ded to-morwe.
But tell me this, why hidest thou with sorwe
The keies of thy chest away fro me?
It is my good as wel as thin parde.
What, wenest thou make an idiot of our dame?
Now by that Lord that cleped is Seint Jame,
Thou shalt nat bothe, though that thou were wood,
Be maister of my body and of my good,
That on thou shalt forgo maugre thin eyen.
What helpeth it of me to enquere and spien?
I trow thou woldest locke me in thy cheste.
Thou shuldest say, Fayr wif, go wher thee leste;
Take your disport; I wol nat leve no tales;
I know you for a trewe wif, dame Ales.
We love no man, that taketh kepe or charge
Wher that we gon, we wol be at our large.
Of alle men yblessed mote he be
The wise astrologien Dan Ptholomee,
That sayth this proverbe in his Almageste:
Of alle men his wisdom is higheste,
That rekketh not who hath the world in hond.
By this proverbe thou shalt wel understond,
Have thou ynough, what thar thee rekke or care
How merily that other folkes fare?
For certes, olde dotard, by your leve,
Ye shullen have queint right ynough at eve.
He is to gret a nigard that wol werne
A man to light a candel at his lanterne;
He shal have never the lesse light parde.
Have thou ynough, thee thar not plainen thee.
Thou sayst also, if that we make us gay
With clothing and with precious array,
That it is peril of our chastitee.
And yet, with sorwe, thou enforcest thee,
And sayst thise wordes in the apostles name:
In habit made with chastitee and shame
Ye women shul appareile you, (quod he)
And nat in tressed here, and gay perrie,
As perles, ne with gold, ne clothes riche.
After thy text, ne after thy rubriche
I wol not work as mochel as a gnat.
Thou sayst also, I walke out like a cat;
For who so wolde senge the cattes skin,
Than wol the cat wel dwellen in hire in;
And if the cattes skin be sleke and gay,
She wol nat dwellen in hous half a day,

But forth she wol, or any day be dawed,
To shew hire skin, and gon a caterwawed.
This is to say, if I be gay, sire shrewe,
I wol renne out, my borel for to shewe.
Sire olde fool, what helpeth thee to spien?
Though thou pray Argus with his hundred eyen
To be my wardecorps, as he can best,
In faith he shal not kepe me but me lest:
Yet coude I make his berd, so mote I the.
Thou sayest eke, that ther ben thinges three,
Which thinges gretly troublen all this erthe,
And that no wight ne may endure the ferthe:
O lefe sire shrewe, Jesu short thy lif.
Yet prechest thou, and sayst, an hateful wif
Yrekened is for on of thise meschances.
Be ther non other maner resemblances
That ye may liken your parables to,
But if a sely wif be on of tho?
Thou likenest eke womans love to helle,
To barrien lond, ther water may not dwelle.
Thou likenest it also to wilde fire;
The more it brenneth, the more it hath desire
To consume every thing, that brent wol be.
Thou sayest, right as wormes shende a tre,
Right so a wif destroieth hir husbond;
This knowen they that ben to wives bond.
Lordings, right thus, as ye han understond,
Bare I stifly min old husbondes on hond,
That thus they saiden in hir dronkennesse;
And all was false, but as I toke witnesse
On Jankin, and upon my nece also.
O Lord, the peine I did hem, and the wo,
Ful giltelcs, by Goddes swete pine;
For as an hors, I coude bite and whine;
I coude plain, and I was in the gilt,
Or elles oftentime I had ben spilt.
Who so first cometh to the mill, first grint;
I plained first, so was our werre ystint.
They were ful glad to excusen hem ful blive
Of thing, the which they never agilt hir live.
Of wenches wold I beren hem on hond,
Whan that for sike unnethes might they stond,
Yet tikeled I his herte for that he
Wend that I had of him so gret chiertee:
I swore that all my walking out by night
Was for to espien wenches that he dight:
Under that colour had I many a mirth.
For all swiche wit is yeven us in our birth;
Deceite, weping, spinning, God hath yeven
To women kindly, while that they may liven.
And thus of o thing I may avaunten me,
At th'ende I had the beter in eche degree,
By sleight or force, or by som maner thing,
As by continual murmur or grutching,
Namely a-bed, ther hadden they meschance,
Ther wold I chide, and don hem no plesance:
I wold no lenger in the bed abide,
If that I felt his arme over my side,
Til he had made his raunson unto me,
Than wold I soffre him do his nicetee.
And therfore every man this tale I tell,
Winne who so may, for all is for to sell:
With empty hond men may no haukes lure,
For winning wold I all his lust endure,
And maken me a feined appetit,
And yet in bacon had I never delit:
That maked me that ever I wold hem chide.
For though the pope had sitten hem beside,
I wold not spare hem at hir owen bord,
For by my trouthe I quitte hem word for word.
As helpe me veray God omnipotent,
Tho I right now shuld make my testament,
I ne owe hem not a word, that it n'is quit,
I brought it so abouten by my wit,
That they must yeve it up, as for the best,
Or elles had we never ben in rest.
For though he loked as a wood leon,
Yet shuld he faille of his conclusion.
Than wold I say, now, goode lefe, take kepe,
How mekely loketh Wilkin oure shepe!
Come ner my spouse, and let me ba thy cheka.
Ye shulden be al patient and meke,
And han a swete spiced conscience,
Sith ye so preche of Jobes patience.
Suffreth alway, sin ye so wel can preche,
And but ye do, certain we shal you teche
That it is faire to han a wif in pees.
On of us two moste bowen doutelees:
And, sith a man is more resonable
Than woman is, ye mosten ben suffrable.
What aileth you to grutchen thus and grone?
Is it for ye wold have my queint alone?
Why take it all: lo, have it every del.
Peter, I shrew you but ye love it wel.
For if I wolde sell my *belle chose*,
I coude walke as fresshe as is a rose,
But I wol kepe it for your owen toth.
Ye be to blame, by God, I say you soth.
Swiche maner wordes hadden we on hond.
Now wol I speken of my fourthe husbond.
My fourthe husbonde was a revellour,
This is to sayn, he had a paramour,
And I was yonge and ful of ragerie,
Stibborne and strong, and joly as a pie.
Tho coude I dancen to an harpe smale,
And sing ywis as any nightingale,
Whan I had dronke a draught of swete wine.
Metellius, the foule cherle, the swine,
That with a staf beraft his wif hire lif
For she drank wine, though I had ben his wif,
Ne shuld he not have daunted me fro drinke:
And after wine of Venus most I thinke.
For al so siker as cold engendreth hayl,
A likerous mouth most han a likerous tayl.
In woman vinolent is no defence,
This knowen lechours by experience.
But, lord Crist, whan that it remembreth me
Upon my youth, and on my jolitee,
It tikleth me about myn herte-rote.
Unto this day it doth myn herte bote,
That I have had my world as in my time.
But age, alas! that all wol envenime,
Hath me beraft my beautee and my pith:
Let go, farewel, the devil go therwith.
The flour is gon, ther n'is no more to tell,
The bren, as I best may, now moste I sell.
But yet to be right mery wol I fond.
Now forth to tellen of my fourthe husbond.
I say, I had in herte gret despit,
That he of any other had delit;
But he was quit by God and by Seint Joce:
I made him of the same wood a croce,
Not of my body in no foule manere,
But certainly I made folk swiche chere,
That in his owen grese I made him frie
For anger, and for veray jalousie.
By God, in erth I was his purgatorie,
For which I hope his soule be in glorie.
For, God it wote, he sate ful oft and songe,
Whan that his sho ful bitterly him wronge.

ras no wight, save God and he, that wiste
ıy a wise how sore that I him twiste.
d whan I came fro Jerusalem,
h ygrave under the rode-beem :
ıis tombe not so curious
ı the sepulcre of him Darius,
that Appelles wrought so sotelly.
ıt wast to bury hem preciously.
n farewel, God give his soule rest,
ıow in his grave and in his chest.
of my fifthe husbonde wol I telle :
his soule never come in helle.
t was he to me the moste shrew,
le I on my ribbes all by rew,
er shal, unto min ending day.
our bed he was so fresh and gay,
erwithall he coude so wel me glose,
that he wolde han my *belle chose*,
hough he had me bet on every bon,
de win agen my love anon.
I love him the bet, for he
his love so dangerous to me.
nmen han, if that I shal not lie,
matere a queinte fantasie.
what thing we may nat lightly have,
er wol we cry all day and crave.
e us thing, and that desiren we ;
n us fast, and thanne wol we flee.
anger uttren we all our chaffare ;
ees at market maketh dere ware,
gret chepe is holden at litel prise ;
oweth every woman that is wise.
fthe husbonde, God his soule blesse,
that I toke for love and no richesse,
time was a clerk of Oxenforde,
d left scole, and went at home at borde
y gossib, dwelling in oure toun :
re hire soule, hire name was Alisoun.
w my herte and all my privetee,
n our parish preest, so mote I the.
bewried I my conseil all ;
l my husbond pissed on a wall,
a thing that shuld have cost his lif,
, and to another worthy wif,
my nece, which that I loved wel,
nave told his conseil every del.
I did ful often, God it wote,
ade his face ful often red and hote
ay shame, and blamed himself, for he
d to me so gret a privetee.
so befell that ones in a Lent,
n times I to my gossib went,
r yet I loved to be gay,
to walke in March, April, and May
ous to hous, to heren sondry tales)
ankin clerk, and my gossib dame Ales,
nyself, into the feldes went.
ısbond was at London all that Lent ;
he better leiser for to pleie,
to see, and eke for to be seie
folk ; what wist I wher my grace
apen for to be, or in what place ?
e made I my visitations
ies, and to processions,
hings eke, and to thise pilgrimages,
es of miracles, and mariages,
red upon my gay skarlet gites.
ormes, ne thise mothes, ne thise mites
ıy paraille frett hem never a del,
st thou why ? for they were used wel.

Now wol I tellen forth what happed me :
I say, that in the feldes walked we,
Till trewely we had swiche daliance
This clerk and I, that of my purveance
I spake to him, and said him how that he,
If I were widewe, shulde wedden me.
For certainly, I say for no bobance,
Yet was I never without purveance
Of mariage, ne of other thinges eke :
I hold a mouses wit not worth a leke,
That hath but on hole for to sterten to,
And if that faille, than is all ydo.
I bare him on hond he had enchanted me ;
(My dame taughte me that subtiltee)
And eke I sayd, I mette of him all night,
He wold han slain me, as I lay upright,
And all my bed was full of veray blood ;
But yet I hope that ye shuln do me good :
For blood betokeneth gold, as me was taught.
And al was false, I dremed of him right naught,
But as I folwed ay my dames lore,
As wel of that as of other thinges more.
But now, sire, let me see, what shall I sain ?
A ha, by God I have my tale again.
Whan that my fourthe husbonde was on bere,
I wept algate and made a sory chere,
As wives moten, for it is the usage ;
And with my coverchefe covered my visage ;
But, for that I was purveyed of a make,
I wept but smal, and that I undertake.
To chirche was myn husbond born a-morwe
With neigheboures that for him maden sorwe,
And Jankin oure clerk was on of tho :
As helpe me God, whan that I saw him go
After the bere, me thought he had a paire
Of legges and of feet, so clene and faire,
That all my herte I yave unto his hold.
He was, I trow, a twenty winter old,
And I was fourty, if I shal say soth,
But yet I had alway a coltes toth.
Gat-tothed I was, and that became me wele,
I had the print of Seinte Venus sele.
As helpe me God, I was a lusty on,
And faire, and riche, and yonge, and wel begon :
And trewely, as min husbondes tolden me,
I had the beste queint that mighte be.
For certes I am all venerian
In feling, and my herte is marcian :
Venus me yave my lust and likerousnesse,
And Mars yave me my sturdy hardinesse.
Min ascendent was Taure, and Mars therinne :
Alas, alas, that ever love was sinne !
I folwed ay min inclination
By vertue of my constellation :
That made me that I coude nat withdraw
My chambre of Venus from a good felaw.
Yet have I Martes merke upon my face,
And also in another privee place.
For God so wisly be my salvation,
I loved never by no discretion,
But ever folwed min appetit,
All were he shorte, longe, blacke, or white,
I toke no kepe, so that he liked me,
How poure he was, ne eke of what degree.
What shuld I saye ? but at the monthes ende
This joly clerk Jankin, that was so hende,
Hath wedded me with gret solempnitee,
And to him yave I all the lond and fee,
That ever was me yeven therbefore :
But afterward repented me ful sore.

He n'olde suffre nothing of my list.
By God he smote me ones with his fist,
For that I root out of his book a lefe,
That of the stroke myn ere wex al defe.
Stibborne I was, as is a leonesse,
And of my tonge a veray jangleresse,
And walke I wold, as I had don beforn,
Fro hous to hous, although he had it sworn:
For which he oftentimes wolde preche,
And me of olde Romaine gestes teche.
How he Sulpitius Gallus left his wif,
And hire forsoke for terme of all his lif,
Not but for open-heded he hire say
Loking out at his dore upon a day.
Another Romaine told he me by name,
That, for his wif was at a sommer game
Without his weting, he forsoke hire eke.
And than wold he upon his Bible seke
That ilke proverbe of Ecclesiaste,
Wher he commandeth, and forbedeth faste,
Man shal not suffer his wif go roule aboute.
Than wold he say right thus withouten doute:
Who so that bildeth his hous all of salwes,
And pricketh his blind hors over the falwes,
And suffereth his wif to go seken halwes,
Is worthy to be honged on the galwes.
But all for nought, I sette not an hawe
Of his proverbes, ne of his olde sawe;
Ne I wold not of him corrected be.
I hate hem that my vices tellen me,
And so do mo of us (God wote) than I.
This made him wood with me all utterly;
I n'olde not forbere him in no cas.
Now wol I say you soth by Seint Thomas,
Why that I rent out of his book a lefe,
For which he smote me, so that I was defe.
He had a book, that gladly night and day
For his disport he wolde it rede alway,
He cleped it Valerie, and Theophrast,
And with that book he lough alway ful fast.
And eke ther was a clerk somtime at Rome,
A cardinal, that highte Seint Jerome,
That made a book again Jovinian,
Which book was ther, and eke Tertullian,
Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowis,
That was abbesse not fer fro Paris;
And eke the paraboles of Salomon,
Ovides art, and bourdes many on;
And alle thise were bonden in o volume.
And every night and day was his custume
(Whan he had leiser and vacation
From other worldly occupation)
To reden in this book of wikked wives.
He knew of hem mo legendes and mo lives,
Than ben of goode wives in the Bible.
For trusteth wel, it is an impossible,
That any clerk wol speken good of wives,
(But if it be of holy seintes lives)
Ne of non other woman never the mo.
Who peinted the leon, telleth me, who?
By God, if wimmen hadden written stories,
As clerkes han, within hir oratories,
They wold have writ of men more wikkednesse,
Than all the merke of Adam may redresse.
The children of Mercury and of Venus
Ben in hir werking ful contrarious.
Mercury loveth wisdom and science,
And Venus loveth riot and dispence.
And for hir divers disposition,
Eche falleth in others exaltation.
As thus, God wote, Mercury is desolat
In Pisces, wher Venus is exaltat,
And Venus falleth wher Mercury is reised.
Therfore no woman of no clerk is preised.
The clerk whan he is old, and may nought do
Of Venus werkes not worth his old sho,
Than sitteth he doun, and writeth in his dotage,
That wimmen cannot kepe hir mariage.
But now to purpos, why I tolde thee,
That I was beten for a book parde.
Upon a night Jankin, that was our sire,
Red on his book, as he sate by the fire,
Of Eva first, that for hire wikkednesse
Was all mankinde brought to wretchednesse,
For which that Jesu Crist himself was slain,
That bought us with his herte-blood again.
Lo here expresse of wimmen may ye find,
That woman was the losse of all mankind.
Tho redde he me how Sampson lost his heres
Sleping, his lemman kitte hem with hire sheres,
Thurgh whiche treson lost he both his eyen.
Tho redde he me, if that I shal not lien,
Of Hercules, and of his Deianire,
That caused him to set himself a-fire.
Nothing forgat he the care and the wo,
That Socrates had with his wives two;
How Xantippa cast pisse upon his hed.
This sely man sat still, as he were ded,
He wiped his hed, no more dorst he sain,
But, er the thonder stint ther cometh rain.
Of Pasiphae, that was the quene of Crete,
For shrewednesse him thought the tale swete.
Fie, speke no more (it is a grisely thing)
Of hire horrible lust and hire liking.
Of Clitemnestra for hire lecherie
That falsely made hire husbond for to die,
He redde it with ful good devotion.
He told me eke, for what occasion
Amphiorax at Thebes lost his lif:
My husbond had a legend of his wif
Eriphile, that for an ouche of gold
Hath prively unto the Grekes told,
Wher that hire husbond hidde him in a place,
For which he had at Thebes sory grace.
Of Lima told he me, and of Lucie:
They bothe made hir husbondes for to die,
That on for love, that other was for hate.
Lima hire husbond on an even late
Empoysoned hath, for that she was his fo:
Lucia likerous loved hire husbond so,
That for he shuld alway upon hire thinke,
She yave him swiche a maner love-drinke,
That he was ded er it were by the morwe:
And thus algates husbondes hadden sorwe.
Than told he me, how on Latumeus
Complained to his felaw Arius,
That in his gardin growed swiche a tree,
On which he said how that his wives three
Honged hemself for hertes despitous.
O leve brother, quod this Arius,
Yeve me a plant of thilke blessed tree,
And in my gardin planted shal it be.
Of later date of wives hath he redde,
That som han slain hir husbonds in hir bedde,
And let hir lechour dight hem all the night,
While that the corps lay in the flore upright:
And som han driven nailes in hir brain,
While that they slepe, and thus they han hem slain:
Som han hem yeven poyson in hir drink:
He spake more harm than herte may bethinke.

therwithall he knew of mo proverbes,
n this world their growen gras or herbes.
is (quod he) thin habitation
h a leon, or a foule dragon,
rith a woman using for to chide.
is (quod he) high in the roof abide,
rith an angry woman doun in the hous,
en so wikked and contrarious :
aten, that hir husbonds loven ay.
sayd, a woman cast hire shame away,
she cast of hire smock ; and forthermo,
woman, but she be chast also,
a gold ring in a sowes nose.
coude wene, or who coude suppose
that in min herte was, and the pine ?
ıan I saw he n'olde never fine
·n on this cursed book all night,
nly three leves have I plight
his book, right as he redde, and eke
ny fist so toke him on the cheke,
oure fire he fell bakward adoun.
up sterte, as doth a wood leoun,
:h his fist he smote me on the hed,
the flore I lay as I were ded.
an he saw how stille that I lay,
agast, and wold have fled away,
ıe last out of my swough I brayde.
thou slain me, false theef ? I sayde,
my lond thus hast thou mordred me ?
ded, yet wol I kissen thee.
·e he came, and kneled faire adoun,
·de ; dere suster Alisoun,
ɜ me God I shal thee never smite :
ıave don it is thyself to wite,
· it me, and that I thee beseke.
eftsones I hitte him on the cheke,
de ; theef, thus much am I awreke.
l I die, I may no longer speke.
t the last, with mochel care and wo
accorded by ourselven two :
me all the bridel in min hond
the governance of hous and lond,
his tonge, and of his hond also,
de him brenne his book anon right tho.
vhan that I had getten unto me
trie all the soverainetee,
t he sayd, min owen trewe wif,
ıee list, the terme of all thy lif,
in honour, and kepe eke min estat ;
at day we never had debat.
pe me so, I was to him as kinde,
wif fro Denmark unto Inde,
ıo trewe, and so was he to me :
o God that sit in majestee
ɜ his soule, for his mercy dere.
l I say my tale if ye wol here.
rere lough whan he had herd all this :
me, quod he, so have I joye and blis,
ı long preamble of a tale.
vhan the Sompnour herd the frere gale,
d this Sompnour) Goddes armes two,
wol entermete him evermo :
le men, a flie and eke a frere
in every dish and eke matere.
·ekest thou of preambulatioun ?
amble or trot ; or pees, or go sit doun :
test our disport in this matere.
olt thou so, Sire Sompnour ? quod the frere ;
my faith I shal, er that I go,
ı Sompnour swiche a tale or two,
That all the folk shal laughen in this place.
Now elles, frere, I wol beshrewe thy face,
(Quod this Sompnour) and I beshrewe me,
But if I telle tales two or three
Of freres, or I come to Sidenborne,
That I shal make thin herte for to morne .
For wel I wot thy patience is gon.
Our hoste cried ; pees, and that anon ;
And sayde ; let the woman tell hire tale.
Ye fare as folk that dronken ben of ale.
Do, dame, tell forth your tale, and that is best.
Al redy, sire, quod she, right as you lest,
If I have licence of this worthy frere.
Yes, dame, quod he, tell forth, and I wol here.

THE WIF OF BATHES TALE.

In olde dayes of the king Artour,
Of which that Bretons speken gret honour,
All was this lond fulfilled of faerie ;
The Elf-quene, with hire joly compagnie,
Danced ful oft in many a grene mede.
This was the old opinion as I rede ;
I speke of many hundred yeres ago ;
But now can no man see non elves mo,
For now the grete charitee and prayeres
Of limitoures and other holy freres,
That serchen every land and every streme,
As thikke as motes in the sonne-beme,
Blissing halles, chambres, kichenes, and boures
Citees and burghes, castles highe and toures,
Thropes and bernes, shepenes and dairies,
This maketh that ther ben no faeries :
For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
Ther walketh now the limitour himself,
In undermeles and in morweninges,
And sayth his Matines and his holy thinges,
And he goth in his limitatioun.
Women may now go safely up and doun,
In every bush, and under every tree,
Ther is non other incubus but he,
And he ne will don hem no dishonour.
And so befell it, that this king Artour
Had in his hous a lusty bacheler,
That on a day came riding fro river :
And happed, that, alone as she was borne,
He saw a maiden walking him beforne,
Of which maid he anon, maugre hire hed,
By veray force beraft hire maidenhed :
For which oppression was swiche clamour,
And swiche pursuite unto the king Artour,
That damned was this knight for to be ded
By cours of lawe, and shuld have lost his hed,
(Paraventure swiche was the statute tho,)
But that the quene and other ladies mo
So longe praieden the king of grace,
Til he his lif him granted in the place,
And yaf him to the quene, all at hire will
To chese whether she wold him save or spill.
The quene thanketh the king with al hire might ;
And after this thus spake she to the knight,
Whan that she saw hire time upon a day.
Thou standest yet (quod she) in swiche array,
That of thy lif yet hast thou no seuretee ;
I grant thee lif, if thou canst tellen me,

What thing is it that women most desiren :
Beware, and kepe thy nekke-bone from yren.
And if thou canst not tell it me anon,
Yet wol I yeve thee leve for to gon
A twelvemonth and a day, to seke and lere
An answer suffisant in this matere.
And seuretee wol I have, or that thou pace,
Thy body for to yelden in this place.
Wo was the knight, and sorwefully he siketh ;
But what ? he may not don all as him liketh.
And at the last he chese him for to wende,
And come agen right at the yeres ende
With swiche answer, as God wold him purvay :
And taketh his leve, and wendeth forth his way.
He seketh every hous and every place,
Wher as he hopeth for to finden grace,
To lernen what thing women loven moste :
But he ne coude ariven in no coste,
Wher as he mighte find in this matere
Two creatures according in fere.
Som saiden, women loven best richesse,
Som saiden honour, som saiden jolinesse,
Som riche array, som saiden lust a-bedde,
And oft time to be widewe and to be wedde.
Some saiden, that we ben in herte most esed
Whan that we ben yflatered and ypreised.
He goth ful nigh the sothe, I wol not lie ;
A man shal winne us best with flaterie ;
And with attendance, and with besinesse
Ben we ylimed bothe more and lesse.
And som men saiden, that we loven best
For to be free, and do right as us lest,
And that no man repreve us of our vice,
But say that we ben wise, and nothing nice.
For trewely ther n'is non of us all,
If any wight wol claw us on the gall,
That we n'ill kike, for that he saith us soth :
Assay, and he shal find it, that so doth.
For be we never so vicious withinne,
We wol be holden wise and clene of sinne.
And som saiden, that gret delit han we
For to be holden stable and eke secre,
And in o purpos stedfastly to dwell,
And not bewreyen thing that men us tell.
But that tale is not worth a rake-stele.
Parde we women connen nothing hele,
Witnesse on Mida ; wol ye here the tale ?
Ovide, amonges other thinges smale,
Said, Mida had under his longe heres
Growing upon his hed two asses eres ;
The whiche vice he hid, as he beste might,
Ful subtilly from every mannes sight,
That, save his wif, ther wist of it no mo ;
He loved hire most, and trusted hire also ;
He praied hire, that to no creature
She n'olde tellen of his disfigure.
She swore him, nay, for all the world to winne,
She n'olde do that vilanie, ne sinne,
To make hire husbond han so foule a name :
She n'olde not tell it for hire owen shame.
But natheles hire thoughte that she dide,
That she so longe shuld a conseil hide ;
Hire thought it swal so sore aboute hire herte,
That nedely som word hire must asterte ;
And sith she dorst nat telle it to no man,
Doun to a marcis faste by she ran,
Til she came ther, hire herte was a-fire :
And as a bitore bumbleth in the mire,
She laid hire mouth unto the water doun.
Bewrey me not, thou water, with thy soun,
Quod she, to thee I tell it, and no mo,
Min husbond hath long asses eres two.
Now is min herte all hole, now is it out,
I might no lenger kepe it out of dout.
Here may ye see, though we a time abide,
Yet out it moste, we can no conseil hide.
The remenant of the tale, if ye wol here,
Redeth Ovide, and ther ye may it lere.
This knight, of which my tale is specially,
Whan that he saw he might not come therby,
(This is to sayn, what women loven most)
Within his brest ful sorweful was his gost.
But home he goth, he mighte not sojourne,
The day was come, that homward must he turne.
And in his way, it happed him to ride
In all his care, under a forest side,
Wheras he saw upon a dance go
Of ladies foure and twenty, and yet mo.
Toward this ilke dance he drow ful yerne,
In hope that he som wisdom shulde lerne ;
But certainly, er he came fully there,
Yvanished was this dance, he n'iste not wher ;
No creature saw he that bare lif,
Save on the grene he saw sitting a wif,
A fouler wight ther may no man devise.
Againe this knight this olde wif gan arise,
And said ; sire knight, here forth ne lith no way.
Tell me what that ye seken by your fay.
Paraventure it may the better be :
Thise olde folk con mochel thing, quod she.
My leve mother, quod this knight, certain,
I n'am but ded, but if that I can sain,
What thing it is that women most desire :
Coude ye me wisse, I wold quite wel your hire.
Plight me thy trouthe here in myn hond, quod she,
The nexte thing that I requere of thee
Thou shalt it do, if it be in thy might,
And I wol tell it you or it be night.
Have here my trouthe, quod the knight, I graunte.
Thanne, quod she, I dare me wel avaunte,
Thy lif is sauf, for I wol stond therby,
Upon my lif the quene wol say as I :
Let see, which is the proudest of hem alle,
That wereth on a kerchef or a calle,
That dare sayn nay of that I shal you teche.
Let us go forth withouten lenger speche.
Tho rowned she a pistel in his ere,
And bad him to be glad, and have no fere.
Whan they ben comen to the court, this knight
Said, he had hold his day, as he had hight,
And redy was his answere, as he saide.
Ful many a noble wif, and many a maide,
And many a widewe, for that they ben wise,
(The quene hireself sitting as a justice)
Assembled ben, his answer for to here,
And afterward this knight was bode appere.
To every wight commanded was silence,
And that the knight shuld tell in audience,
What thing that worldly women loven best.
This knight ne stood not still, as doth a best,
But to this question anon answerd
With manly vois, that all the court it herd.
My liege lady, generally, quod he,
Women desiren to han soverainetee,
As well over hir husbond as hir love,
And for to ben in maistrie him above.
This is your most desire, though ye me kille,
Doth as you list, I am here at your wille.
In all the court ne was ther wif ne maide,
Ne widewe, that contraried that he saide,

d, he was worthy to han his lif.
with that word up stert this olde wif,
that the knight saw sitting on the grene.
quod she, my soveraine lady quene,
your court depart, as doth me right.
te this answer unto this knight,
ich he plighte me his trouthe there,
te thing I wold of him requere,
l it do, if it lay in his might.
this court than pray I thee, sire knight,
ie, that thou me take unto thy wif,
thou wost, that I have kept thy lif:
false, say nay upon thy fay.
knight answered, alas and wala wa!
ght wel that swiche was my behest.
ldes love as chese a new request:
l my good, and let my body go.
han, quod she, I shrewe us bothe two.
ugh that I be olde, foule, and pore,
for all the metal ne the ore,
der erthe is grave, or lith above,
ıy wif I were and eke thy love.
ve? quod he, nay, my dampnation.
ıat any of my nation
ver so foule disparaged be.
for nought; the end is this, that he
ned was, he nedes must hire wed,
eth this olde wif, and goth to bed.
volden som men sayn paraventure,
my negligence I do no cure
ı you the joye and all the array,
the feste was that ilke day.
ıich thing shortly answeren I shal:
er was no joye ne feste at al,
ıs but hevinesse and mochel sorwe:
ely he wedded hire on the morwe,
day after hid him as an oule,
as him, his wif loked so foule.
was the wo the knight had in his thought
e was with his wif a-bed ybrought,
veth, and he turneth to and fro.
lde wif lay smiling evermo,
l: O dere husbond, *benedicite*,
very knight thus with his wif as ye?
he lawe of king Artoures hous?
knight of his thus dangerous?
ur owen love, and eke your wif,
e, which that saved hath your lif,
tes yet did I you never unright.
e ye thus with me this firste night?
ı like a man had lost his wit.
my gilt? for Goddes love tell it,
hal ben amended, if I may.
ıded? quod this knight, alas! nay, nay,
ot ben amended never mo;
t so lothly, and so olde also,
rto comen of so low a kind,
l wonder is though I walwe and wind;
e God, min herte wolde brest.
s, quod she, the cause of your unrest?
rtainly, quod he, no wonder is.
ire, quod she, I coude amend all this,
ne list, er it were dayes three,
e mighten bere you unto me.
r ye speken of swiche gentillesse,
scended out of old richesse,
rfore shullen ye be gentilmen;
rrogance n'is not worth an hen.
who that is most vertuous alway,
d apert, and most entendeth ay
To do the gentil dedes that he can,
And take him for the gretest gentilman.
Crist wol we claime of him our gentillesse,
Not of our elders for hir old richesse.
For though they yeve us all hir heritage,
For which we claime to ben of high parage,
Yet may they not bequethen, for no thing,
To non of us, hir vertuous living,
That made hem gentilmen called to be,
And bade us folwen hem in swiche degree.
Wel can the wise poet of Florence,
That highte Dant, speken of this sentence:
Lo, in swiche maner rime is Dantes tale.
Ful selde up riseth by his branches smale
Prowesse of man, for God of his goodnesse
Wol that we claime of him our gentillesse:
For of our elders may we nothing claime
But temporel thing, that man may hurt and maime
Eke every wight wot this as wel as I,
If gentillesse were planted naturelly
Unto a certain linage doun the line,
Prive and apert, than wold they never fine
To don of gentillesse the faire office,
They mighten do no vilanie or vice.
Take fire and bere it into the derkest hous
Betwix this and the mount of Caucasus,
And let men shette the dores, and go thenne,
Yet wol the fire as faire lie and brenne
As twenty thousand men might it behold;
His office naturel ay wol it hold,
Up peril of my lif, til that it die.
Here may ye see wel, how that genterie
Is not annexed to possession,
Sith folk ne don hir operation
Alway, as doth the fire, lo, in his kind.
For God it wot, men moun ful often find
A lordes sone do shame and vilanie.
And he that wol han pris of his genterie,
For he was boren of a gentil hous,
And had his elders noble and vertuous,
And n'ill himselven do no gentil dedes,
Ne folwe his gentil auncestrie, that ded is,
He n'is not gentil, be he duk or erl;
For vilains sinful dedes make a cherl.
For gentillesse n'is but the renomee
Of thin auncestres, for hir high bountee,
Which is a strange thing to thy persone:
Thy gentillesse cometh fro God alone.
Than cometh our veray gentillesse of grace,
It was no thing bequethed us with our place.
Thinketh how noble, as saith Valerius,
Was thilke Tullius Hostilius,
That out of poverte rose to high noblesse.
Redeth Senek, and redeth eke Boece,
Ther shull ye seen expresse, that it no dred is,
That he is gentil that doth gentil dedis.
And therfore, leve husbond, I thus conclude,
Al be it that min auncestres weren rude,
Yet may the highe God, and so hope I,
Granten me grace to liven vertuously:
Than am I gentil, whan that I beginne
To liven vertuously, and weiven sinne.
And ther as ye of poverte me repreve,
The highe God, on whom that we beleve,
In wilful poverte chese to lede his lif:
And certes, every man, maiden, or wif
May understond, that Jesus heven king
Ne wold not chese a vicious living.
Glad poverte is an honest thing certain,
This wol Senek and other clerkes sain.

Who so that halt him paid of his poverte,
I hold him rich, al had he not a sherte.
He that coveiteth is a poure wight,
For he wold han that is not in his might.
But he that nought hath, ne coveiteth to have,
Is riche, although ye hold him but a knave.
Veray poverte is sinne proprely.
Juvenal saith of poverte merily:
The poure man whan he goth by the way,
Beforn the theves he may sing and play.
Poverte is hateful good; and, as I gesse,
A ful gret bringer out of besinesse;
A gret amender eke of sapience
To him, that taketh it in patience.
Poverte is this, although it seme elenge,
Possession that no wight wol challenge.
Poverte ful often, whan a man is low,
Maketh his God and eke himself to know:
Poverte a spectakel is, as thinketh me,
Thurgh which he may his veray frendes see.
And therfore, sire, sin that I you not greve,
Of my poverte no more me repreve.
Now, sire, of elde, that ye repreven me:
And certes, sire, though non auctoritee
Were in no book, ye gentiles of honour
Sain, that men shuld an olde wight honour,
And clepe him fader, for your gentillesse;
And auctours shal I finden, as I gesse.
Now thir ye sain that I am foule and old,
Than drede ye not to ben a cokewold.
For filthe, and elde also, so mote I the,
Ben grete wardeins upon chastitee.
But natheles, sin I know your delit,
I shal fulfill your worldly appetit.
Chese now (quod she) on of thise thinges twey,
To han me foule and old til that I dey,
And be to you a trewe humble wif,
And never you displese in all my lif:
Or elles wol ye han me yonge and faire,
And take your aventure of the repaire,
That shal be to your hous because of me,
Or in som other place it may wel be?
Now chese yourselven whether that you liketh.
This knight aviseth him, and sore siketh,
But at the last he said in this manere;
My lady and my love, and wif so dere,
I put me in your wise governance,
Cheseth yourself which may be most plesance
And most honour to you and me also,
I do no force the whether of the two:
For as you liketh, it sufficeth me.
Than have I got the maisterie, quod she,
Sin I may chese and governe as me lest.
Ye certes, wif, quod he, I hold it best.
Kisse me, quod she, we be no lenger wrothe,
For by my trouth I wol be to you bothe,
This is to sayn, ye bothe faire and good.
I pray to God that I mote sterven wood,
But I to you be al so good and trewe,
As ever was wif, sin that the world was newe;
And but I be to-morwe as faire to seen,
As any lady, emperice, or quene,
That is betwix the Est and eke the West,
Doth with my lif and deth right as you lest.
Cast up the curtein, loke how that it is.
And whan the knight saw veraily all this,
That she so faire was, and so yonge therto,
For joye he hent hire in his armes two:
His herte bathed in a bath of blisse,
A thousand time a-row he gan hire kisse.
And she obeyed him in every thing,
That mighte don him plesance or liking.
And thus they live unto hir lives ende
In parfit joye, and Jesu Crist us sende
Husbondes meke and yonge, and fressh a-bed,
And grace to overlive hem that we wed.
And eke I pray Jesus to short hir lives,
That wol not be governed by hir wives.
And old and angry nigards of dispence,
God send hem sone a veray pestilence.

THE FRERES TALE.

THE FRERES PROLOGUE.

This worthy limitour, this noble Frere,
He made alway a maner louring chere
Upon the Sompnour, but for honestee
No vilains word as yet to him spake he:
But at the last he said unto the wif;
Dame, (quod he) God yeve you right good lif,
Ye have here touched, all so mote I the,
In scole matere a ful gret difficultee.
Ye han said mochel thing right wel, I say:
But, dame, here as we riden by the way,
Us nedeth not to speken but of game,
And let auctoritees in Goddes name
To preching, and to scole eke of clergie.
But if it like unto this compagnie,
I wol you of a Sompnour tell a game;
Parde ye may wel knowen by the name,
That of a Sompnour may no good be said;
I pray that non of you be evil apaid;
A Sompnour is a renner up and doun
With mandements for fornicatioun,
And is ybete at every tounes ende.
Tho spake our hoste; A, sire, ye shuld ben hende
And curteis, as a man of your estat,
In compagnie we wiln have no debat:
Telleth your tale, and let the Sompnour be.
Nay, quod the Sompnour, let him say by me
What so him list; whan it cometh to my lot,
By God I shal him quiten every grot.
I shal him tellen which a gret honour
It is to be a flatering limitour,
And eke of many another maner crime,
Which nedeth not rehersen at this time,
And his office I shal him tell ywis.
Our hoste answered; pees, no more of this.
And afterward he said unto the Frere,
Tell forth your tale, min owen maister dere.

THE FRERES TALE.

ı ther was dwelling in my contree
edeken, a man of high degree,
ldely did execution
ıhing of fornication,
ıecraft, and eke of bauderie,
nation, and avouterie,
:he-reves, and of testaments,
racts, and of lack of sacraments,
e, and of simonie also ;
:es lechours did he gretest wo ;
ulden singen, if that they were hent ;
ale titheres weren foule yshent,
ersone wold upon hem plaine,
ght astert hem no pecunial peine.
ıle tithes, and smale offering,
e the peple pitously to sing ;
he bishop hent hem with his crook
:ren in the archedekens book ;
ıd he thurgh his jurisdiction
o don on hem correction.
ıd a Sompnour redy to his hond,
boy was non in Englelond ;
tilly he had his espiaille,
ıght him wel wher it might ought availle.
le spare of lechours on or two,
en him to foure and twenty mo.
ugh this Sompnour wood be as an hare,
his harlotrie I wol not spare,
ben out of hir correction,
ın of us no jurisdiction,
er shul have, terme of all hir lives.
·, so ben the women of the stives,
ıis Sompnour, yput out of our cure.
, with mischance and with misaventure,
ste said, and let him tell his tale.
lleth forth, and let the Sompnour gale,
reth not, min owen maister dere.
false theef, this Sompnour, quod the frere,
ray baudes redy to his hond,
hauke to lure in Englelond,
ıld him all the secree that they knewe,
: acquaintance was not come of newe ;
:eren his approvers prively.
ke himself a gret profit therby :
ıister knew not alway what he wan.
ıten mandement, a lewed man
ıde sompne, up peine of Cristes curse,
ıey were inly glad to fille his purse,
aken him gret festes at the nale.
ght as Judas hadde purses smale
ıs a theef, right swiche a theef was he,
ıster hadde but half his duetee.
s (if I shal yeven him his laud)
f, and eke a Sompnour, and a baud.
ıad eke wenches at his retenue,
'hether that sire Robert or sire Hue,
:ke, or Rauf, or who so that it were
ıy by hem, they told it in his ere.
vas the wenche and he of on assent.
e wold fecche a feined mandement,
ɔmpne hem to the chapitre bothe two,
ill the man, and let the wenche go.
wold he say ; frend, I shal for thy sake
ike thee out of oure lettres blake ;
har no more as in this cas travaille ;
hy frend ther I may thee availle.

Certain he knew of briboures many mo,
Than possible is to tell in yeres two :
For in this world n'is dogge for the bowe,
That can an hurt dere from an hole yknowe,
Bet than this Sompnour knew a slie lechour,
Or an avoutrer, or a paramour :
And for that was the fruit of all his rent,
Therfore on it he set all his entent.
And so befell, that ones on a day
This Sompnour, waiting ever on his pray,
Rode forth to sompne a widewe, an olde ribibe,
Feining a cause, for he wold han a bribe.
And happed that he saw beforn him ride
A gay yeman under a forest side :
A bow he bare, and arwes bright and kene,
He had upon a courtepy of grene,
An hat upon his hed with freuges blake.
Sire, quod this Sompnour, haile and wel atake.
Welcome, quod he, and every good felaw ;
Whider ridest thou under this grene shaw ?
(Saide this yeman) wolt thou fer to-day ?
This Sompnour him answerd, and saide, nay.
Here faste by (quod he) is min entent
To riden, for to reisen up a rent,
That longeth to my lordes duetee.
A, art thou than a baillif ? Ye, quod he.
(He dorste not for veray filth and shame
Say that he was a Sompnour, for the name.)
De par dieux, quod this yeman, leve brother,
Thou art a baillif, and I am another.
I am unknowen, as in this contree.
Of thin acquaintance I wol prayen thee,
And eke of brotherhed, if that thee list.
I have gold and silver lying in my chist ;
If that thee hap to come in to our shire,
Al shal be thin, right as thou wolt desire.
Grand mercy, quod this Sompnour, by my faith.
Everich in others hond his trouthe laith,
For to be sworne brethren til they dey.
In daliaunce they riden forth and pley.
This Sompnour, which that was as ful of jangles,
As ful of venime ben thise wariangles,
And ever enquering upon every thing,
Brother, quod he, wher is now your dwelling,
Another day if that I shuld you seche ?
This yeman him answerd in softe speche ;
Brother, quod he, fer in the North contree,
Wheras I hope somtime I shal thee see.
Or we depart I shal thee so wel wisse,
That of min hous ne shalt thou never misse.
Now brother, quod this Sompnour, I you pray,
Teche me, while that we riden by the way,
(Sith that ye ben a baillif as am I)
Som subtiltee, and tell me faithfully
In min office how I may moste winne.
And spareth not for conscience or for sinne,
But, as my brother, tell me how do ye.
Now by my trouthe, brother min, said he,
As I shal tellen thee a faithful tale.
My wages ben ful streit and eke ful smale ;
My lord is hard to me and dangerous,
And min office is ful laborious ;
And therfore by extortion I leve,
Forsoth I take all that men wol me yeve.
Algates by sleighte or by violence
Fro yere to yere I win all my dispence ;
I can no better tellen faithfully.
Now certes, (quod this Sompnour) so fare I ;
I spare not to taken, God it wote,
But if it be to hevy or to hote.

What I may gete in conseil prively,
No maner conscience of that have I.
N'ere min extortion, I might not liven,
Ne of swiche japes wol I not be shriven.
Stomak ne conscience know I non;
I shrew thise shrifte-faders everich on.
Wel be we met by God and by Seint Jame.
But leve brother, tell me than thy name,
Quod this Sompnour. Right in this mene while
This yeman gan a litel for to smile.
Brother, quod he, wolt thou that I thee telle?
I am a fend, my dwelling is in helle,
And here I ride about my pourchasing,
To wote wher men wol give me any thing.
My pourchas is th'effect of all my rente.
Loke how thou ridest for the same entente
To winnen good, thou rekkest never how,
Right so fare I, for riden wol I now
Unto the worldes ende for a praye.
A, quod this Sompnour, *benedicite*, what say ye?
I wend ye were a yeman trewely.
Ye have a mannes shape as wel as I.
Have ye than a figure determinat
In helle, ther ye ben in your estat?
Nay certainly, quod he, ther have we non,
But whan us liketh we can take us on,
Or elles make you wene that we ben shape
Somtime like a man, or like an ape;
Or like an angel can I ride or go;
It is no wonder thing though it be so,
A lousy jogelour can deceiven thee,
And parde yet can I more craft than he.
Why, quod the Sompnour, ride ye than or gon
In sondry shape, and not alway in on?
For we, quod he, wol us swiche forme make,
As most is able our preye for to take.
What maketh you to han al this labour?
Ful many a cause, leve sire Sompnour,
Saide this fend. But alle thing hath time;
The day is short, and it is passed prime,
And yet ne wan I nothing in this day;
I wol entend to winning, if I may,
And not entend our thinges to declare:
For, brother min, thy wit is al to bare
To understand, although I told hem thee.
But for thou axest, why labouren we:
For somtime we be Goddes instruments,
And menes to don his commandements,
Whan that him list, upon his creatures,
In divers actes and in divers figures:
Withouten him we have no might certain,
If that him list to stonden theragain.
And somtime at our praiere han we leve,
Only the body, and not the soule to greve:
Witnesse on Job, whom that we diden wo.
And somtime han we might on bothe two,
This is to sain, on soule and body eke.
And somtime be we suffered for to seke
Upon a man, and don his soule unreste
And not his body, and all is for the beste.
Whan he withstandeth our temptation,
It is a cause of his salvation,
Al be it that it was not our entente
He shuld be sauf, but that we wold him hente.
And somtime be we servants unto man,
As to the archebishop Seint Dunstan,
And to the apostle servant eke was I.
Yet tell me, quod this Sompnour, faithfully,
Make ye you newe bodies thus alway
Of elements? The fend answered, nay:
Somtime we feine, and somtime we arise
With dede bodies, in ful sondry wise,
And speke as renably, and faire, and wel,
As to the Phitonesse did Samuel:
And yet wol som men say it was not he.
I do no force of your divinitee.
But o thing warne I thee, I wol not jape,
Thou wolt algates wete how we be shape:
Thou shalt hereafterward, my brother dere,
Come, wher thee nedeth not of me to lere,
For thou shalt by thin owen experience
Conne in a chaiere rede of this sentence,
Bet than Virgile, while he was on live,
Or Dant also. Now let us riden blive,
Fer I wol holden compagnie with thee,
Til it be so that thou forsake me.
Nay, quod this Sompnour, that shal never betide.
I am a yeman knowen is ful wide;
My trouthe wol I hold, as in this cas.
For though thou were the devil Sathanas,
My trouthe wol I hold to thee, my brother,
As I have sworne, and eche of us to other,
For to be trewe brethren in this cas,
And bothe we gon abouten our pourchas.
Take thou thy part, what that men wol thee yeve,
And I shal min, thus may we bothe leve.
And if that any of us have more than other,
Let him be trewe, and part it with his brother.
I graunte, quod the devil, by my fay.
And with that word they riden forth hir way,
And right at entring of the tounes ende,
To which this Sompnour shope him for to wende,
They saw a cart, that charged was with hay,
Which that a carter drove forth on his way.
Depe was the way, for which the carte stood:
The carter smote, and cried as he were wood,
Heit scot, heit brok, what spare ye for the stones?
The fend (quod he) you fecche body and bones,
As ferforthly as ever ye were foled,
So mochel wo as I have with you tholed.
The devil have al, bothe hors, and cart, and hay.
The Sompnour sayde, here shal we have a pray;
And nere the fend he drow, as nought ne were,
Ful prively, and rouned in his ere:
Herken my brother, herken, by thy faith,
Herest thou not, how that the carter saith?
Hent it anon, for he hath yeve it thee,
Both hay and cart, and eke his caples three.
Nay, quod the devil, God wot, never a del,
It is not his entente, trust thou me wel,
Axe him thyself, if thou not trowest me,
Or elles stint a while and thou shalt see.
This carter thakketh his hors upon the croupe,
And they begonne to drawen and to stoupe.
Heit now, quod he, ther Jesu Crist you blesse,
And all his hondes werk, both more and lesse:
That was wel twight, min owen liard boy,
I pray God save thy body and Seint Eloy.
Now is my cart out of the slough parde.
Lo, brother, quod the fend, what told I thee?
Here may ye seen, min owen dere brother,
The cherl spake o thing, but he thought another
Let us go forth abouten our viage;
Here win I nothing upon this cariage.
Whan that they comen somwhat out of toun,
This Sompnour to his brother gan to roune;
Brother, quod he, here woneth an old rebekke,
That had almost as lefe to lese hire nekke,
As for to yeve a peny of hire good.
I wol have twelf pens though that she be wood,

Or I wol somone hire to our office ;
And yet, God wot, of hire know I no vice.
But for thou canst not, as in this contree,
Winnen thy cost, take here ensample of me.
This Sompnour clappeth at the widewes gate ;
Come out, he sayd, thou olde very trate ;
I trow thou hast som frere or preest with thee.
Who clappeth ? said this wif, *benedicite*,
God save you, sire, what is your swete will ?
I have, quod he, of somons here a bill.
Up peine of cursing, loke that thou be
To-morwe before the archedekenes knee,
To answere to the court, of certain thinges.
Now lord, quod she, Crist Jesu, king of kinges,
So wisly helpe me, as I ne may.
I have ben sike, and that ful many a day.
I may not go so fer (quod she) ne ride,
But I be ded, so priketh it in my side.
May I not axe a libel, sire Sompnour,
And answere ther by my procuratour
To swiche thing as men wold apposen me ?
Yes, quod this Sompnour, pay anon, let see,
Twelf pens to me, and I wol thee acquite.
I shal no profit han therby but lite :
My maister hath the profit and not I.
Come of, and let me riden hastily ;
Yeve me twelf pens, I may no lenger tarie.
Twelf pens, quod she, now lady Seinte Marie
So wisly helpe me out of care and sinne,
This wide world though that I shuld it winne,
Ne have I not twelf pens within my hold.
Ye knowen wel that I am poure and old ;
Kithe your almesse upon me poure wretche.
Nay than, quod he, the foule fend me fetche,
If I thee excuse, though thou shuldest be spilt.
Alas ! quod she, God wot, I have no gilt.
Pay me, quod he, or by the swete Seinte Anne
As I wol bere away thy newe panne
For dette, which thou owest me of old,
Whan that thou madest thyn husbond cokewold,
I paied at home for thy correction.
Thou liest, quod she, by my salvation,
Ne was I never or now, widew ne wif,
Sompned unto your court in all my lif ;
Ne never I n'as but of my body trewe.
Unto the devil rough and blake of hewe
Yeve I thy body and my panne also.
And whan the devil herd hire cursen so
Upon hire knees, he sayd in this manere ;
Now, Mabily, min owen moder dere,
Is this your will in ernest that ye sey ?
The devil, quod she, so fetche him or he dey,
And panne and all, but he wol him repent.
Nay, olde stot, that is not min entent,
Quod this Sompnour, for to repenten me
For any thing that I have had of thee ;
I wold I had thy smok and every cloth.
Now brother, quod the devil, be not wroth ;
Thy body and this panne ben min by right.
Thou shalt with me to helle yet to-night,
Wher thou shalt knowen of our privetee
More than a maister of divinitee.
And with that word the foule fend him hent.
Body and soule, he with the devil went,
Wher as thise Sompnours han hir heritage ;
And God that maked after his image
Mankinde, save and gide us all and some,
And lene this Sompnour good man to become.
Lordings, I coude have told you, (quod this frere)
Had I had leiser for this Sompnour here,
After the text of Crist, and Poule, and John,
And of oure other doctours many on,
Swiche peines, that your hertes might agrise,
Al be it so, that no tonge may devise,
Though that I might a thousand winter telle,
The peines of thilke cursed hous of helle.
But for to kepe us fro that cursed place,
Waketh, and prayeth Jesu of his grace,
So kepe us fro the temptour Sathanas.
Herkneth this word, beware as in this cas.
The leon sit in his awaite alway
To sle the innocent, if that he may.
Disposeth ay your hertes to withstond
The fend, that you wold maken thral and bond ;
He may not tempten you over your might,
For Crist wol be your champion and your knight ;
And prayeth, that this Sompnour him repent
Of his misdedes, or that the fend him hent.

THE SOMPNOURES TALE.

THE SOMPNOURES PROLOGUE.

This Sompnour in his stirops high he stood,
Upon this Frere his herte was so wood,
That like an aspen leef he quoke for ire :
Lordings, quod he, but o thing I desire,
I you beseche, that of your curtesie,
Sin ye han herd this false Frere lie,
As suffrethe me, I may my tale telle.
This Frere bosteth that he knoweth helle,
And, God it wot, that is but litel wonder,
Freres and fendes ben but litel asonder.
For parde, ye han often time herd telle,
How that a Frere ravished was to helle
In spirit ones by a visioun,
And as an angel lad him up and doun,
To shewen him the peines that ther were,
In all the place saw he not a Frere,
Of other folk he saw ynow in wo.
Unto this angel spake the Frere tho ;
Now, sire, quod he, han Freres swiche a grace,
That non of hem shal comen in this place ?
Yes, quod this angel, many a millioun :
And unto Sathanas he lad him doun.
(And now hath Sathanas, saith he, a tayl
Broder than of a carrike is the sayl)
Hold up thy tayl, thou Sathanas, quod he,
Shew forth thin ers, and let the Frere see
Wher is the nest of Freres in this place.
And er than half a furlong way of space,

Right so as bees out swarmen of an hive,
Out of the devils ers ther gonnen drive
A twenty thousand Freres on a route.
And thurghout hell they swarmed al aboute,
And com agen, as fast as they may gon,
And in his ers they crepen everich on:
He clapt his tayl agen, and lay ful still.
This Frere, whan he loked had his fill
Upon the turments of this sory place,
His spirit God restored of his grace
Into his body agen, and he awoke;
But natheles for fere yet he quoke,
So was the devils ers ay in his mind,
That is his heritage of veray kind.
God save you alle, save this cursed frere;
My prologue wol I end in this manere.

THE SOMPNOURES TALE.

Lordings, ther is in Yorkshire, as I gesse,
A mersh contree ycalled Holdernesse,
In which ther went a limitour aboute
To preche, and eke to beg, it is no doute.
And so befell that on a day this frere
Had preched at a chirche in his manere,
And specially aboven every thing
Excited he the peple in his preching
To trentals, and to yeve for Goddes sake,
Wherwith men mighten holy houses make,
Ther as divine service is honoured,
Not ther as it is wasted and devoured,
Ne ther it nedeth not for to be yeven,
As to possessioners, that mowen leven
(Thanked be God) in wele and abundance.
Trentals, sayd he, deliveren fro penance
Hir frendes soules, as wel olde as yonge,
Ye, whan that they ben hastily ysonge,
Not for to hold a preest jolif and gay,
He singeth not but o masse on a day.
Delivereth out (quod he) anon the soules.
Ful hard it is, with fleshhook or with oules
To ben yclawed, or to bren or bake:
Now spede you hastily for Cristes sake.
And whan this frere had said all his entent,
With *qui cum patre* forth his way he went.
Whan folk in chirche had yeve him what hem lest,
He went his way, no lenger wold he rest,
With scrippe and tipped staf, ytucked hie:
In every hous he gan to pore and prie,
And begged mele and chese, or elles corn.
His felaw had a staf tipped with horn,
A pair of tables all of ivory,
And a pointel ypolished fetisly,
And wrote alway the names, as he stood,
Of alle folk that yave hem any good,
Askaunce that he wolde for hem preye.
Yeve us a bushel whete, or malt, or reye,
A Goddes kichel, or a trippe of chese,
Or elles what you list, we may not chese;
A Goddes halfpeny, or a masse peny;
Or yeve us of your braun, if ye have any,
A dagon of your blanket, leve dame,
Our suster dere, (lo here I write your name)
Bacon or beef, or swiche thing as ye find.
A sturdy harlot went hem ay behind,
That was hir hostes man, and bare a sakke,
And what men yave hem, laid it on his bakke.
And whan that he was out at dore, anon
He planed away the names everich on,
That he before had written in his tables:
He served hem with nifles and with fables.
Nay, ther thou liest, thou Sompnour, quod the frere.
Pees, quod our hoste, for Cristes moder dere,
Tell forth thy tale, and spare it not at all.
So thrive I, quod this Sompnour, so I shall.
So long he went fro hous to hous, til he
Came to an hous, ther he was wont to be
Refreshed more than in a hundred places.
Sike lay the husbond man, whos that the place is,
Bedred upon a couche low he lay:
Deus hic, quod he, O Thomas frend, good day,
Sayde this frere all curtisly and soft.
Thomas, quod he, God yelde it you, ful oft
Have I upon this benche faren ful wele,
Here have I eten many a mery mele.
And fro the benche he drove away the cat,
And laied adoun his potent and his hat,
And eke his scrip, and set himself adoun:
His felaw was ywalked into toun
Forth with his knave, into that hostelrie,
Wher as he shope him thilke night to lie.
O dere maister, quod this sike man,
How have ye faren sin that March began?
I saw you not this fourtene night and more.
God wot, quod he, laboured have I ful sore,
And specially for thy salvation
Have I sayd many a precious orison,
And for our other frendes, God hem blesse.
I have this day ben at your chirche at messe,
And said a sermon to my simple wit,
Not all after the text of holy writ,
For it is hard to you, as I suppose,
And therefore wol I teche you ay the glose.
Glosing is a ful glorious thing certain,
For letter sleth, so as we clerkes sain.
Ther have I taught hem to be charitable,
And spend hir good ther it is resonable.
And ther I saw our dame, a, wher is she?
Yonder I trow that in the yard she be,
Sayde this man, and she wol come anon.
Ey maister, welcome be ye by Seint John,
Sayde this wif, how fare ye hertily?
This frere ariseth up ful curtisly,
And hire embraceth in his armes narwe,
And kisseth hire swete, and chirketh as a sparwe
With his lippes: dame, quod he, right wel,
As he that is your servant every del.
Thanked be God, that you yaf soule and lif,
Yet saw I not this day so faire a wif
In all the chirche, God so save me.
Ye, God amende defautes, sire, quod she,
Algates welcome be ye, by my fay.
Grand mercy, dame, that have I found alway.
But of your grete goodnesse, by your leve,
I wolde pray you that ye not you greve,
I wol with Thomas speke a litel throw:
Thise curates ben so negligent and slow
To gropen tendrely a conscience.
In shrift, in preching is my diligence
And study, in Peters wordes and in Poules,
I walke and fisshe Cristen mennes soules,
To yeld our Lord Jesu his propre rent;
To sprede his word is sette all min entent.
Now by your faith, o dere sire, quod she,
Chideth him wel for Seinte Charitee.
He is ay angry as is a pissemire,
Though that he have all that he can desire,

him wrie a-night, and make him warm,
him lay my leg and eke min arm,
n as our bore, lith in our stie :
ort of him right non have I,
plese him in no maner cas.
as, *jeo vous die*, Thomas, Thomas,
th the fend, this muste ben amended.
ing that high God hath defended,
f wol I speke a word or two.
aister, quod the wif, er that I go,
ye dine? I wol go theraboute.
me, quod he, *jeo vous die sanz doute*,
t of a capon but the liver,
ir white bred nat but a shiver,
that a rosted pigges hed,
wolde for me no beest were ded)
I with you homly suffisance.
n of litel sustenance.
iath his fostring in the Bible.
ay so redy and so penible
that my stomak is destroied.
, dame, that ye be nought annoied,
so frendly you my conseil shewe ;
n'old have told it but a fewe.
e, quod she, but o word er I go.
ded within thise wekes two,
that ye went out of this toun.
saw I by revelatioun,
frere, at home in our dortour.
sain, that er than half an hour
eth, I saw him borne to blisse
sion, so God me wisse.
sextein, and our fermerere,
en trewe freres fifty yere ;
now, God be thanked of his lone,
jubilee, and walke alone.
rose, and all our covent eke,
a tere trilling on our cheke,
noise or clatering of belles,
as our song, and nothing elles,
o Crist I bade an orison,
iim of my revelation.
d dame, trusteth me right wel,
s ben more effectuel,
we seen of Cristes secree thinges,
, folk although that they be kinges.
poverte, and in abstinence,
folk in richesse and dispence
d drinke, and in hir foule delit.
is worldes lust all in despit.
Dives liveden diversely,
guerdon hadden they therby.
l pray, he must fast and be clene,
soule, and make his body lene.
s sayth the apostle ; cloth and food
, though they be not ful good.
esse and the fasting of us freres,
it Crist accepteth our praieres.
es forty daies and forty night
that the high God fui of might
him in the mountagne of Sinay :
y wombe of fasting many a day,
e the lawe, that was writen
es finger ; and Eli, wel ye witen,
Oreb, er he had any speche
God, that is our lives leche,
ong, and was in contemplance.
iat had the temple in governance,
e other preestes everich on,
nple whan they shulden gon
To praien for the peple, and do servise,
They n'olden drinken in no maner wise
No drinke, which that might hem dronken make,
But ther in abstinence pray and wake,
Lest that they deiden : take heed what I say—
But they be sobre that for the peple pray—
Ware that I say—no more : for it sufficeth.
Our Lord Jesu, as holy writ deviseth,
Yave us ensample of fasting and praieres:
Therfore we mendiants, we sely freres,
Ben wedded to poverte and continence,
To charitee, humblesse, and abstinence,
To persecution for rightwisnesse,
To weping, misericorde, and to clenenesse.
And therfore may ye see that our praieres
(I speke of us, we mendiants, we freres)
Ben to the highe God more acceptable
Than youres, with your festes at your table.
Fro Paradis first, if I shal not lie,
Was man out chased for his glotonie,
And chast was man in Paradis certain.
But herken now, Thomas, what I shal sain,
I have no text of it, as I suppose,
But I shal find it in a maner glose ;
That specially our swete Lord Jesus
Spake this by freres, whan he sayde thus,
Blessed be they that poure in spirit ben.
And so forth all the gospel may ye sen,
Whether it be liker our profession,
Or hirs that swimmen in possession,
Fie on hir pompe, and on hir glotonie,
And on hir lewednesse : I hem defie.
Me thinketh they ben like Jovinian,
Fat as a whale, and walken as a swan ;
Al vinolent as botel in the spence ;
Hir praier is of ful gret reverence ;
Whan they for soules say the Psalm of Davit,
Lo, buf they say, *Cor meum eructavit.*
Who foloweth Cristes gospel and his lore
But we, that humble ben, and chast, and pore,
Workers of Goddes word, not auditours?
Therfore right as an hauke upon a sours
Up springeth into the aire, right so praieres
Of charitable and chast besy freres,
Maken hir sours to Goddes eres two.
Thomas, Thomas, so mote I ride or go,
And by that lord that cleped is Seint Ive,
N'ere thou our broder, shuldest thou not thrive.
In our chapitre pray we day and night
To Crist, that he thee sende hele and might
Thy body for to welden hastily.
God wot, quod he, nothing therof fele I,
As help me Crist, as I in fewe yeres
Have spended upon divers maner freres
Ful many a pound, yet fare I never the bet ;
Certain my good have I almost beset :
Farewel my good, for it is al ago.
The frere answered, O Thomas, dost thou so?
What nedeth you diverse freres to seche?
What nedeth him that hath a parfit leche,
To sechen other leches in the toun?
Your inconstance is your confusion.
Hold ye than me, or elles our covent,
To pray for you ben insufficient?
Thomas, that jape n'is not worth a mite ;
Your maladie is for we han to lite.
A, yeve that covent half a quarter otes ;
And yeve that covent four and twenty grotes ;
And yeve that frere a peny, and let him go :
Nay, nay, Thomas, it may no thing be so.

What is a ferthing worth parted on twelve?
Lo, eche thing that is oned in himselve
Is more strong than whan it is yscatered.
Thomas, of me thou shalt not ben yflatered,
Thou woldest han our labour al for nought.
The highe God, that all this world hath wrought,
Saith, that the workman worthy is his hire.
Thomas, nonght of your tresor I desire
As for myself, but that all our covent
To pray for you is ay so diligent:
And for to bilden Cristes owen chirche.
Thomas, if ye wol lernen for to wirche,
Of bilding up of chirches may ye finde
If it be good, in Thomas lif of Inde.
Ye liggen here ful of anger and of ire,
With which the devil set your herte on fire,
And chiden here this holy innocent
Your wif, that is so good and patient.
And therfore trow me, Thomas, if thee lest,
Ne strive not with thy wif, as for the best.
And bere this word away now by thy faith,
Touching swiche thing, lo, what the wise saith:
Within thy hous ne be thou no leon;
To thy suggets do non oppression;
Ne make thou not thin acquaintance to flee.
And yet, Thomas, eftsones charge I thee,
Beware from ire that in thy bosom slepeth,
Ware fro the serpent, that so slily crepeth
Under the gras, and stingeth subtilly.
Beware, my sone, and herken patiently,
That twenty thousand men han lost hir lives
For striving with hir lemmans and hir wives.
Now sith ye han so holy and meek a wif,
What nedeth you, Thomas, to maken strif?
Ther n'is ywis no serpent so cruel,
Whan man tredeth on his tail, ne half so fel,
As woman is, whan she hath caught an ire;
Veray vengeance is than all hire desire.
Ire is a sinne, on of the grete seven,
Abhominable unto the God of heven,
And to himself it is destruction.
This every lewed vicar and parson
Can say, how ire engendreth homicide;
Ire is in soth executour of pride.
I coud of ire say so mochel sorwe,
My tale shulde lasten til to-morwe.
And therfore pray I God both day and night,
An irous man God send him litel might.
It is gret harm, and certes gret pitee
To sette an irous man in high degree.
Whilom ther was an irous potestat,
As saith Senek, that during his estat
Upon a day out riden knightes two.
And, as fortune wold that it were so,
That on of hem came home, that other nought.
Anon the knight before the juge is brought,
That saide thus; thou hast thy felaw slain,
For which I deme thee to the deth certain.
And to another knight commanded he;
Go, lede him to the deth, I charge thee.
And happed, as they wenten by the wey
Toward the place ther as he shulde dey,
The knight came, which men wenden had be dede.
Than thoughten they it was the beste rede
To lede hem bothe to the juge again.
They saiden, lord, the knight ne hath not slain
His felaw, here he stondeth hol alive.
Ye shull be ded, quod he, so mot I thrive,
That is to say, both on, and two, and three.
And to the firste knight right thus spake he.
I damned thee, thou must algate be ded:
And thou also must nedes lese thyn hed,
For thou art cause why thy felaw deyeth.
And to the thridde knight right thus he seyeth,
Thou hast not don that I commanded thee
And thus he did do slen hem alle three.
Irous Cambises was eke dronkelew,
And ay delighted him to ben a shrew.
And so befell, a lord of his meinie,
That loved vertuous moralitee,
Sayd on a day betwix hem two right thus:
A lord is lost, if he be vicious;
And dronkennesse is eke a foule record
Of any man, and namely of a lord.
Ther is ful many an eye and many an ere
Awaiting on a lord, and he n'ot wher.
For Goddes love drinke more attemprely:
Win maketh man to lesen wretchedly
His mind, and eke his limmes everich on.
The revers shalt thou see, quod he, anon,
And preve it by thyn owen experience,
That win ne doth to folk no swiche offence.
Ther is no win bereveth me my might
Of hond, ne foot, ne of min eyen sight.
And for despit he dranke mochel more
An hundred part than he had don before,
And right anon, this cursed irous wretche
This knightes sone let before him fetche,
Commanding him he shuld before him stond:
And sodenly he took his bow in hond,
And up the streng he pulled to his ere,
And with an arwe he slow the child right ther.
Now whether have I a siker hond or non?
Quod he, Is all my might and minde agon?
Hath win bereved me min eyen sight?
What shuld I tell the answer of the knight?
His son was slain, ther is no more to say.
Beth ware therfore with lordes for to play,
Singeth *Placebo*, and I shal if I can,
But if it be unto a poure man:
To a poure man men shuld his vices telle,
But not to a lord, though he shuld go to helle.
Lo, irous Cirus, thilke Persien,
How he destroyed the river of Gisen,
For that an hors of his was dreint therin,
Whan that he wente Babilon to win:
He made that the river was so smal,
That wimmen might it waden over al.
Lo, what said he, that so wel techen can?
Ne be no felaw to non irous man,
Ne with no wood man walke by the way,
Lest thee repent; I wol no forther say.
Now, Thomas, leve brother, leve thin ire,
Thou shalt me find as just, as is a squire;
Hold not the devils knif ay to thin herte,
Thin anger doth thee all to sore smerte,
But shew to me all thy confession.
Nay, quod the sike man, by Seint Simon
I have ben shriven this day of my curat;
I have him told al holly min estat.
Nedeth no mo to speke of it, sayth he,
But if me list of min humilitee.
Yeve me than of thy gold to make our cloistre,
Quod he, for many a muscle and many an oistre,
Whan other men han ben ful wel at ese,
Hath been our food, our cloistre for to rese:
And yet, God wot, uneth the fundament
Parfourmed is, ne of our pavement
N'is not a tile yet within our wones:
By God we owen fourty pound for stones.

Thomas, for him that harwed helle,
ıote we oure bokes selle,
acke oure predication,
this world all to destruction.
› fro this world wold us bereve,
: save, Thomas, by your leve,
ɜreve out of this world the sonne.
ın teche and worken as we conne ?
› not of litel time, (quod he)
Elie was, and Elisee,
ben, that find I of record,
:, ythonked be our Lord.
ıas, help for Seinte Charitee.
n anon he sette him on his knee.
ɜ man woxe wel neigh wood for ire,
hat the frere had ben a-fire
ılse dissimulation.
hing as is in my possession,
ıat may I yeve you and non other :
› thus, how that I am your brother.
quod this frere, ye, trusteth wel ;
dame the letter of our sele.
, quod he, and somwhat shal I yeve
holy covent while I live ;
ı hond thou shalt it have anon,
ıdition, and other non,
lepart it so, my dere brother,
frere have as moche as other :
hou swere on thy profession
fraud or cavilation.
t, quod the frere, upon my faith.
thall his hond in his he layth ;
r faith, in me shal be no lak.
: thin hond adoun right by my bak,
nan, and grope wel behind,
r buttok, ther thou shalte find
at I have hid in privetee.
this frere, that shal go with me.
ıis hond he launcheth to the clifte,
' to finden ther a gifte.
n this sike man felte this frere
owel gropen ther and here,
ond he let the frere a fart ;
o capel drawing in a cart,
han let a fart of swiche a soun.
ɜ up sterte, as doth a wood leoun :
ɜrl, quod he, for Goddes bones,
hou in despit don for the nones :
abie this fart, if that I may.
ıie, which that herden this affray,
g in, and chased out the frere,
ıe goth with a ful angry chere,
felaw, ther as lay his store :
› it were a wilde bore,
with his teeth, so was he wroth.
as doun to the court he goth,
ıer woned a man of gret honour,
hat he was alway confessour :
y man was lord of that village.
came, as he were in a rage,
ıis lord sat eting at his bord :
night the frere speke o word,
t he saide, God you see.
l gan loke, and saide, *Benedicite !*
re John, what maner world is this ?
ıat som thing ther is amis ;
› the wood were ful of theves.
ıon, and tell me what your greve is,
ben amended, if I may.
uod he, had a despit to-day,
God yelde you adoun, in your village,
That in this world ther n'is so poure a page,
That he n'olde have abhominatioun
Of that I have received in youre toun :
And yet ne greveth me nothing so sore,
As that the olde cherl, with lokkes hore,
Blasphemed hath oure holy covent eke.
Now, maister, quod this lord, I you beseke.
No maister, sire, quod he, but servitour,
Though I have had in scole that honour.
God liketh not, that men us Rabi call,
Neither in market, ne in your large hall.
No force, quod he, but tell me all your grefe.
Sire, quod this Frere, an odious meschefe
This day betid is to min ordre, and me,
And so *per consequens* to eche degree
Of holy chirche, God amende it sone.
Sire, quod the lord, ye wot what is to don :
Distempre you not, ye ben my confessour.
Ye ben the salt of the erthe, and the savour ;
For Goddes love your patience now hold ;
Telle me your grefe. And he anon him told
As ye han herd before, ye wot wel what.
The lady of the hous ay stille sat,
Til she had herde what the Frere said.
Ey, goddes moder, quod she, blisful maid,
Is ther ought elles ? tell me faithfully.
Madame, quod he, how thinketh you therby ?
How that me thinketh ? quod she; so God me spede,
I say, a cherle hath don a cherles dede.
What shuld I say ? God let him never the ;
His sike hed is ful of vanitee ;
I hold him in a maner frenesie.
Madame, quod he, by God I shal not lie,
But I in other wise may ben awreke,
I shal diffame him over all, ther I speke ;
This false blasphemour, that charged me
To parten that wol not departed be,
To every man ylike, with meschance.
The lord sat stille, as he were in a trance,
And in his herte he rolled up and doun,
How had this cherl imaginatioun
To shewen swiche a probleme to the frere.
Never erst or now ne herd I swiche matere ;
I trow the Devil put it in his mind.
In all Arsmetrike shal ther no man find
Beforn this day of swiche a question.
Who shulde make a demonstration,
That every man shuld han ylike his part
As of a soun or savour of a fart ?
O nice proude cherl, I shrewe his face.
Lo, sires, quod the lord, with harde grace,
Who ever herd of swiche a thing or now ?
To every man ylike ? tell me how.
It is an impossible, it may not be.
Ey, nice cherl, God let him never the.
The rombling of a fart, and every soun,
N'is but of aire reverberatioun,
And ever it wasteth lite and lite away ;
Ther n'is no man can demen, by my fay,
If that it were departed equally.
What ? lo my cherl, lo yet how shrewedly
Unto my confessour to-day he spake ;
I hold him certain a demoniake.
Now ete your mete, and let the cherl go play,
Let him go honge himself a devil way.
Now stood the lordes squier atte bord,
That carf his mete, and herde word by word
Of all this thing, of which I have you sayd.
My lord, quod he, be ye not evil apaid,

I coude telle for a goune-cloth
To you, sire frere, so that ye be not wroth,
How that this fart shuld even ydeled be
Amongo your covent, if it liked thee.
Tell, quod the lord, and thou shalt have anon
A goune-cloth, by God and by seint John.
My lord, quod he, whan that the weder is faire,
Withouten winde, or pertourbing of aire,
Let bring a cart-whele here into this hall,
But loke that it have his spokes all;
Twelf spokes hath a cart-whele communly;
And bring me than twelf freres, wete ye why?
For threttene is a covent as I gesse:
Your confessour here for his worthinesse
Shal parfourme up the noumbre of his covent.
Than shull they knele adoun by on assent,
And to every spokes end in this manere
Ful sadly lay his nose shal a frere;
Your noble confessour, ther God him save,
Shal hold his nose upright under the nave.
Than shal this cherl, with bely stif and tought
As any tabour, hider ben ybrought;
And set him on the whele right of this cart
Upon the nave, and make him let a fart,
And ye shull seen, up peril of my lif,
By veray preef that is demonstratif,
That equally the soun of it wol wende,
And eke the stinke, unto the spokes ende,
Save that this worthy man, your confessour,
(Because he is a man of gret honour)
Shal han the firste fruit, as resen is.
The noble usage of freres yet it is,
The worthy men of hem shul first be served.
And certainly he hath it wel deserved;
He hath to-day taught us so mochel good,
With preching in the pulpit ther he stood,
That I may vouchesauf, I say for me,
He hadde the firste smel of fartes three,
And so wold all his brethren hardely,
He bereth him so faire and holyly.
The lord, the lady, and eche man, save the frere,
Sayden, that Jankin spake in this matere
As wel as Euclide, or elles Ptholomee.
Touching the cherl, they sayden, subtiltee
And highe wit made him speken as he spake;
He n'is no fool, ne no demoniake.
And Jankin hath ywonne a newe goune;
My tale is don, we ben almost at toune.

THE CLERKES TALE.

THE CLERKES PROLOGUE.

Sire Clerk of Oxenforde, our hoste said,
Ye ride as stille and coy, as doth a maid,
Were newe spoused, sitting at the bord:
This day ne herd I of your tonge a word.
I trow ye studie abouten som sophime:
But Salomon saith, that every thing hath time.
For Goddes sake as beth of better chere,
It is no time for to studien here.
Tell us som mery tale by your fay;
For what man that is entred in a play,
He nedes most unto the play assent.
But precheth not, as freres don in Lent,
To make us for our olde sinnes wepe,
Ne that thy tale make us not to slepe.
Tell us som mery thing of aventures,
Your termes, your coloures, and your figures,
Kepe hem in store, til so be ye endite
Hie stile, as whan that men to kinges write.
Speketh so plain at this time, I you pray,
That we may understonden what ye say.
This worthy Clerk benignely answerde;
Hoste, quod he, I am under your yerde,
Ye have of us as now the governance,
And therfore wolde I do you obeysance,
As fer as reson asketh hardely:
I wol you tell a tale, which that I
Lerned at Padowe of a worthy clerk,
As preved by his wordes and his werk.
He is now ded, and nailed in his cheste,
I pray to God so yeve his soule reste.
Fraunceis Petrark, the laureat poete,
Highte this clerk, whos rethorike swete
Enlumined all Itaille of poetrie,
As Lynyan did of philosophie,
Or law, or other art particulere:
But deth, that wol not suffre us dwellen here,
But as it were a twinkling of an eye,
Hem both hath slaine, and alle we shul dye.
But forth to tellen of this worthy man,
That taughte me this tale, as I began,
I say that first he with hie stile enditeth
(Or he the body of his tale writeth)
A proheme, in the which descriveth he
Piemont, and of Saluces the contree,
And speketh of Apennin the hilles hie,
That ben the boundes of west Lumbardie
And of mount Vesulus in special,
Wher as the Poo out of a welle smal
Taketh his firste springing and his sours,
That estward ay encreseth in his cours
To Emelie ward, to Ferare, and Venise,
The which a longe thing were to devise.
And trewely, as to my jugement,
Me thinketh it a thing impertinent,
Save that he wol conveyen his matere:
But this is the tale which that ye mow here.

THE CLERKES TALE.

Ther is right at the West side of Itaille
Doun at the rote of Vesulus the cold,
A lusty plain, habundant of vitaille,
Ther many a toun and tour thou maist behold,
That founded were in time of fathers old,
And many another delitable sighte,
And Saluces this noble contree highte.

rkis whilom lord was of that lond,
his worthy elders him before,
ysant, ay redy to his hond,
l his lieges, bothe lesse and more :
delit he liveth, and hath don yore,
and drad, thurgh favour of fortune,
his lordes, and of his commune.

rith he was, to speken of linage,
tilest yborne of Lumbardie,
erson, and strong, and yong of age,
of honour and of curtesie :
ynough, his contree for to gie,
om thinges that he was to blame,
lter was this yonge lordes name.

e him thus, that he considered nought
coming what might him betide,
is lust present was all his thought,
to hauke and hunt on every side :
h all other cures let he slide,
he n'old (and that was worst of all)
no wif for ought that might befall.

hat point his peple bare so sore,
kmel on a day to him they went,
f hem, that wisest was of lore,
that the lord wold best assent
shuld tell him what the peple ment,
coud he wel shew swiche matere)
e markis said as ye shull here.

le markis, your humanitee
us and yeveth us hardinesse,
time is of necessitee,
to you mow tell our hevinesse :
h, lord, than of your gentillesse,
with pitous herte unto you plaine,
our eres nat my vois disdaine.

e I not to don in this matere
n another man hath in this place,
s moch as ye, my lord so dere,
y shewed me favour and grace,
e better aske of you a space
nce, to shewen our request,
my lord, to don right as you lest.

rtes, lord, so wel us liketh you
our werke, and ever have don, that we
n not ourself devisen how
ten live in more felicitee :
ing, lord, if it your wille be,
to be a wedded man you lest,
re your peple in soverain hertes rest.

h your nekke under the blisful yok
intee, and not of servise,
at men clepen spousaile or wedlok :
keth, lord, among your thoughtes wise,
t our dayes passe in sondry wise ;
gh we slepe, or wake, or rome, or ride,
the time, it wol no man abide.

ough your grene youthe floure as yet,
h age alway as still as ston,
manaseth every age, and smit
stat, for ther escapeth non :
certain, as we knowe eche on
shul die, as uncertain we all
at day whan deth shal on us fall.

Accepteth than of us the trewe entent,
That never yet refuseden your hest,
And we wol, lord, if that ye wol assent,
Chese you a wife in short time at the mest,
Borne of the gentillest and of the best
Of all this lond, so that it oughte seme
Honour to God and you, as we can deme.

Deliver us out of all this besy drede,
And take a wif, for highe Goddes sake :
For if it so befell, as God forbede,
That thurgh your deth your linage shulde slake,
And that a strange successour shuld take
Your heritage, o ! wo were us on live :
Wherfore we pray you hastily to wive.

Hir meke praiere and hir pitous chere
Made the markis for to han pitee.
Ye wol, quod he, min owen peple dere,
To that I never er thought constrainen me.
I me rejoyced of my libertee,
That selden time is found in mariage ;
Ther I was free, I moste ben in servage.

But natheles I see your trewe entent,
And trust upon your wit, and have don ay :
Wherfore of my free will I wol assent
To wedden me, as sone as ever I may.
But ther as ye han profred me to-day
To chesen me a wif, I you relese
That chois, and pray you of that profer cese.

For God it wot, that children often ben
Unlike hir worthy eldres hem before,
Bountee cometh al of God, not of the stren,
Of which they ben ygendred and yhore :
I trust in Goddes bountee, and therfore
My mariage, and min estat, and rest
I him betake, he may don as him lest.

Let me alone in chesing of my wif,
That charge upon my bak I wol endure :
But I you pray, and charge upon your lif,
That what wif that I take, ye me assure
To worship hire while that hire lif may dure,
In word and werk both here and elles where,
As she an emperoures doughter were.

And forthermore this shuln ye swere, that ye
Again my chois shul never grutch ne strive.
For sith I shal forgo my libertee
At your request, as ever mote I thrive,
Ther as min herte is set, ther wol I wive :
And but ye wol assent in swiche manere,
I pray you speke no more of this matere.

With hertly will they sworen and assenten
To all this thing, ther saide not o wight nay :
Beseeching him of grace, or that they wenten,
That he wold granten hem a certain day
Of his spousaile, as sone as ever he may,
For yet alway the peple somwhat dred,
Lest that this markis wolde no wif wed.

He granted hem a day, swiche as him lest,
On which he wold be wedded sikerly,
And said he did all this at hir request ;
And they with humble herte ful buxumly
Kneling upon hir knees ful reverently
Him thonken all, and thus they han an end
Of hir entente, and home agen they wend.

And hereupon he to his officeres
Commandeth for the feste to purvay.
And to his privee knightes and squieres
Swiche charge he yave, as him list on hem lay:
And they to his commandement obey,
And eche of hem doth al his diligence
To do unto the feste al reverence.

PARS SECUNDA.

Nought fer fro thilke paleis honourable,
Wher as this markis shope his mariage,
Ther stood a thorpe, of sighte delitable,
In which that poure folk of that village
Hadden hir bestes and hir herbergage,
And of hir labour toke hir sustenance,
After that the erthe yave hem habundance.

Among this poure folk ther dwelt a man,
Which that was holden pourest of hem all:
But highe God somtime senden can
His grace unto a litel oxes stall:
Janicola men of that thorpe him call.
A doughter had he, faire ynough to sight,
And Grisildis this yonge maiden hight.

But for to speke of vertuous beautee,
Than was she on the fairest under sonne:
Ful pourely yfostred up was she:
No likerous lust was in hire herte yronne;
Wel ofter of the well than of the tonne
She dranke, and for she wolde vertue plese,
She knew wel labour, but non idel ese.

But though this mayden tendre were of age,
Yet in the brest of hire virginitee
Ther was enclosed sad and ripe corage:
And in gret reverence and charitee
Hire olde poure fader fostred she:
A few sheep spinning on the feld she kept,
She wolde not ben idel til she slept.

And whan she homward came, she wolde bring
Wortes and other herbes times oft,
The which she shred and sethe for hire living,
And made hire bed ful hard, and nothing soft:
And ay she kept hire fadres lif on loft
With every obeisance and diligence,
That child may don to fadres reverence

Upon Grisilde, this poure creature,
Ful often sithe this markis sette his eye,
As he on hunting rode paraventure:
And whan it fell that he might hire espie,
He not with wanton loking of folie
His eyen cast on hire, but in sad wise
Upon hire chere he wold him oft avise,

Commending in his herte hire womanhede,
And eke hire vertue, passing any wight
Of so yong age, as wel in chere as dede.
For though the peple have no gret insight
In vertue, he considered ful right
Hire bountee, and disposed that he wold
Wedde hire only, if ever he wedden shold.

The day of wedding came, but no wight can
Tellen what woman that it shulde be,
For which mervaille wondred many a man,
And saiden, whan they were in privetee,
Wol not our lord yet leve his vanitee?
Wol he not wedde? alas, alas the while!
Why wol he thus himself and us begile?

But natheles this markis hath do make
Of gemmes, sette in gold and in asure,
Broches and ringes, for Grisildes sake
And of hire clothing toke he the mesure
Of a maiden like unto hire stature,
And eke of other ornamentes all,
That unto swiche a wedding shulde fall.

The time of underne of the same day
Approcheth, that this wedding shulde be,
And all the paleis put was in array,
Both halle and chambres, echo in his degree,
Houses of office stuffed with plentee
Ther mayst thou see of deinteous vitaille,
That may be found, as fer as lasteth Itaille.

This real, markis richely arraide,
Lordes and ladies in his compagnie,
The which unto the feste weren praide,
And of his retenue the bachelerie,
With many a soun of sondry melodie,
Unto the village, of the which I told,
In this array the righte way they hold.

Grisilde of this (God wot) ful innocent,
That for hire shapen was all this array,
To fetchen water at a welle is went,
And cometh home as sone as ever she may.
For wel she had herd say, that thilke day
The markis shulde wedde, and, if she might,
She wolde fayn han seen som of that sight.

She thought, I wol with other maidens stond,
That ben my felawes, in our dore, and see
The markisesse, and therto wol I fond
To don at home, as sone as it may be,
The labour which that longeth unto me,
And than I may at leiser hire behold,
If she this way unto the castel hold.

And as she wolde over the threswold gon,
The markis came and gan hire for to call,
And she set doun hire water-pot anon
Beside the threswold in an oxes stall,
And doun upon hire knees she gan to fall,
And with sad countenance kneleth still,
Til she had herd what was the lordes will.

This thoughtful markis spake unto this maid
Ful soberly, and said in this manere:
Wher is your fader, Grisildis? he said.
And she with reverence in humble chere
Answered, lord, he is al redy here.
And in she goth withouten lenger lette,
And to the markis she hire fader fette.

He by the hond than toke this poure man,
And saide thus, whan he him had aside:
Janicola, I neither may ne can
Lenger the plesance of min herte hide,
If that thou vouchesauf, what so betide,
Thy doughter wol I take or that I wend
As for my wif, unto hire lives end.

Thou lovest me, that wot I wel certain,
And art my faithful liegeman ybore,
And all that liketh me, I dare wel sain

ı thee, and specially therfore
that point, that I have said before,
hou wolt unto this purpos drawe,
ı me as for thy son in lawe.

ıoden cas this man astoned so,
l he wex, abaist, and al quaking
l, unnethes said he wordes mo,
/ thus; Lord, quod he, my willing
wol, ne ageins your liking
ı thing, min owen lord so dere,
ı you list, governeth this matere.

wol I, quod this markis softely,
thy chambre, I, and thou, and she,
collation, and wost thou why?
ol ask hire, if it hire wille be
y wif, and reule hire after me:
this shal be don in thy presence,
t speke out of thin audience.

n the chambre, while they were aboute
ee, which as ye shul after here,
le came into the hous withoute,
ıdred hem, in how honest manere
ly she kept hire fader dere:
rly Grisildis wonder might,
er erst ne saw she swiche a sight.

ınder is though that she be astoned,
o gret a gest come in that place,
ı was to non swiche gestes woned,
ch she loked with ful pale face.
rtly forth this matere for to chace,
n the wordes that the markis said
benigne, veray, faithful maid.

de, he said, ye shuln wel understond,
to your fader and to me,
ou wedde, and eke it may so stond
ıpose, ye wol that it so be:
e demaundes aske I first (quod he)
it shal be don in hasty wise,
assent, or elles you avise?

this, be ye redy with good herte
ıy lust, and that I freely may
ıest thinketh do you laugh or smerte,
er ye to grutchen, night ne day,
whan I say ya, ye say not nay,
by word, ne frouning countenance?
ıis, and here I swere our alliance.

ng upon this thing, quaking for drede,
le; Lord, indigne and unworthy
ı thilke honour, that ye me bede,
ve wol yourself, right so wol I:
e I swere, that never willingly
, ne thought, I n'ill you disobeie
ıe ded, though me were loth to deie.

is ynough, Grisilde min, quod he.
th he goth with a ful sobre chere,
he dore, and after than came she,
the peple he said in this manere:
my wif, quod he, that stondeth here.
eth her, and loveth hire, I pray,
me loveth, ther n'is no more to say.

for that nothing of hire olde gere
lde bring into his hous, he bad
ımen shuld despoilen hire right there,

Of which thise ladies weren nothing glad
To handle hire clothes wherin she was clad:
But natheles this maiden bright of hew
Fro foot to hed they clothed han all new.

Hire heres han they kempt, that lay untressed
Ful rudely, and with hir fingres smal
A coroune on hire hed they han ydressed,
And sette hire ful of nouches gret and smal:
Of hire array what shuld I make a tale?
Unneth the peple hire knew for hire fairnesse,
Whan she transmewed was in swiche richesse.

This markis hath hire spoused with a ring
Brought for the same cause, and than hire sette
Upon an hors snow-white, and wel ambling,
And to his paleis, or he lenger lette,
(With joyful peple, that hire lad and mette)
Conveyed hire, and thus the day they spende
In revel, til the sonne gan descende.

And shortly forth this tale for to chace,
I say, that to this newe markisesse
God hath swiche favour sent hire of his grace,
That it ne semeth not by likelinesse
That she was borne and fed in rudenesse,
As in a cote, or in an oxes stall,
But nourished in an emperoures hall.

To every wight she waxen is so dere,
And worshipful, that folk ther she was bore,
And fro hire birthe knew hire yere by yere,
Unnethes trowed they, but dorst han swore,
That to Janicle, of which I spake before,
She doughter n'as, for as by conjecture
Hem thoughte she was another creature.

For though that ever vertuous was she,
She was encresed in swiche excellence
Of thewes good, yset in high bountee,
And so discrete, and faire of eloquence,
So benigne, and so digne of reverence,
And coude so the peples herte enbrace,
That eche hire loveth that loketh on hire face.

Not only of Saluces in the toun
Published was the bountee of hire name,
But eke beside in many a regioun,
If on saith wel, another saith the same:
So spredeth of hire hie bountee the fame,
That men and women, yong as wel as old,
Gon to Saluces upon hire to behold.

Thus Walter lowly, nay but really,
Wedded with fortunat honestetee,
In Goddes pees liveth ful esily
At home, and grace ynough outward had he:
And for he saw that under low degree
Was honest vertue hid, the peple him held
A prudent man, and that is seen ful seld.

Not only this Grisildis thurgh hire wit
Coude all the fete of wifly homlinesse,
But eke whan that the cas required it,
The comune profit coude she redresse:
Ther n'as discord, rancour, ne hevinesse
In all the lond, that she ne coude appese,
And wisely bring hem all in hertes ese.

Though that hire husbond absent were or non,
If gentilmen, or other of that contree
Were wroth, she wolde bringen hem at on,

So wise and ripe wordes hadde she,
And jugement of so gret equitee,
That she from heven sent was, as men wend,
Peple to save, and every wrong to amend.

Not longe time after that this Grisilde
Was wedded, she a doughter hath ybore,
All had hire lever han borne a knave child:
Glad was the markis and his folk therfore,
For though a maiden childe come all before,
She may unto a knave child atteine
By likelyhed, sin she n'is not barreine.

PARS TERTIA.

Ther fell, as it befalleth times mo,
Whan that this childe had souked but a throwe,
This markis in his herte longed so
To tempt his wif, hire sadnesse for to knowe,
That he ne might out of his herte throwe
This marveillous desir his wif to assay,
Needles, God wot, he thought hire to affray.

He had assaied hire ynough before,
And found hire ever good, what nedeth it
Hire for to tempt, and alway more and more?
Though som men praise it for a subtil wit,
But as for me, I say that evil it sit
To assay a wif whan that it is no nede,
And putten hire in anguish and in drede.

For which this markis wrought in this manere;
He came a-night alone ther as she lay
With sterne face, and with ful trouble chere,
And sayde thus; Grisilde, (quod he) that day
That I you toke out of your poure array,
And put you in estat of high noblesse,
Ye han it not forgotten, as I gesse.

I say, Grisilde, this present dignitee,
In which that I have put you, as I trow,
Maketh you not forgetful for to be
That I you toke in poure estat ful low,
For ony wele ye mote yourselven know.
Take hede of every word that I you say,
Ther is no wight that hereth it but we tway.

Ye wote yourself wel how that ye came here
Into this hous, it is not long ago,
And though to me ye be right lefe and dere,
Unto my gentils ye be nothing so:
They say, to hem it is gret shame and wo
For to be suggetes, and ben in servage
To thee, that borne art of a smal linage.

And namely sin thy doughter was ybore,
Thise wordes han they spoken douteles,
But I desire, as I have don before,
To live my lif with hem in rest and pees:
I may not in this cas be reccheles;
I mote do with thy doughter for the best,
Not as I wold, but as my gentils lest.

And yet, God wote, this is ful loth to me:
But natheles withouten youre weting
I wol nought do, but thus wol I (quod he)
That ye to me assenten in this thing.
Shew now youre patience in youre werking.
That ye me hight and swore in youre village
The day that maked was our mariage.

Whan she had herd all this, she not ameved
Neyther in word, in chere, ne countenance,
(For as it semed, she was not agreved)
She sayde; Lord, all lith in your plesance,
My child and I, with hertely obeisance
Ben youres all, and ye may save or spill,
Your owen thing: werketh after your will.

Ther may no thing, so God my soule save,
Like unto you, that may displesen me:
Ne I desire nothing for to have,
Ne drede for to lese, sauf only ye:
This will is in myn herte, and ay shal be,
No length of time, or deth may this deface,
Ne change my corage to an other place.

Glad was this markis for hire answering,
But yet he feined as he were not so,
Al drery was his chere and his loking,
Whan that he shuld out of the chambre go.
Sone after this, a furlong way or two,
He prively hath told all his entent
Unto a man, and to his wif him sent.

A maner sergeant was this prive man,
The which he faithful often founden had
In thinges gret, and eke swiche folk wel can
Don execution on thinges bad:
The lord knew wel, that he him loved and drad.
And whan this sergeant wist his lordes will,
Into the chambre he stalked him ful still.

Madame, he sayd, ye mote foryeve it me,
Though I do thing, to which I am constreined:
Ye ben so wise, that right wel knowen ye,
That lordes hestes may not ben yfeined,
They may wel be bewailed and complained,
But men mote nedes to hir lust obey,
And so wol I, ther n'is no more to say.

This child I am commanded for to take.
And spake no more, but out the child he hent
Despitously, and gan a chere to make,
As though he wold have slain it, or he went.
Grisildis most al suffer and al consent:
And as a lambe, she sitteth meke and still,
And let this cruel sergeant do his will.

Suspecious was the diffame of this man,
Suspect his face, suspect his word also,
Suspect the time in which he this began:
Alas! hire doughter, that she loved so,
She wende he wold han slaien it right tho,
But natheles, she neither wept ne siked
Conforming hire to that the markis liked.

But at the last to speker she began,
And mekely she to the sergeant praid
(So as he was a worthy gentil man)
That she might kisse hire child, or that it deid.
And in hire barme this litel child she leid,
With ful sad face, and gan the child to blisse,
And lulled it, and after gan it kisse.

And thus she sayd in hire benigne vois:
Farewel, my child, I shal thee never see,
But sin I have thee marked with the crois,
Of thilke fader yblessed mote thou be,

died upon a crois of tree :
itel child, I him betake,
ht shalt thou dien for my sake.

ıt to a norice in this cas
ıard this routhe for to see :
ı moder than han cried alas,
s so sad stedfast was she,
dured all adversitee,
ıergeant mekely she sayde,
ıgen your litel yonge mayde.

(quod she) and doth my lordes hest :
wold I pray you of your grace,
ɔrd forbade you at the lest,
litel body in som place,
ne no briddes it to-race.'
ord to that purpos wold say,
child and went upon his way.

ant came unto his lord again,
ildes wordes and hire chere
point for point, in short and plain,
esented with his doughter dere.
is lord hath routhe in his manere,
s his purpos held he still,
ɔn, whan they wol have hir will,

this sergeant that he prively
child ful softe wind and wrappe,
rcumstances tendrely,
t in a cofre, or in a lappe ;
ine his hed of for to swappe
a shulde know of his entent,
e came, ne whider that he went ;

ɔloigne, unto his suster dere,
time of Pavie was countesse,
take, and shew hire this matere,
ire to don hire besinesse
ɔ fostren in all gentillesse,
hild that it was he bade hire hide
wight, for ought that may betide.

ant goth, and hath fulfilde this thing.
marquis now retorne we ;
h he ful fast imagining,
ves chere he mighte see,
wordes apperceive, that she
ed, but he never coud hire finde,
on ylike sad and kinde.

as humble, as besy in service
love, as she was wont to be,
him, in every maner wise ;
doughter not a word spake she :
ıt for non adversitee
ı hire, ne never hire doughters name
she, for ernest ne for game.

PARS QUARTA.

tat ther passed ben foure yere
childe was, but, as God wold,
lde she bare by this Waltere
s, and fair for to behold :
hat folk it to his fader told,
, but all his contree mery
childe, and God they thonke and hery.

Whan it was two yere old, and from the brest
Departed of his norice, on a day
This markis caughte yet another lest
To tempte his wif yet ofter, if he may.
O ! nedeles was she tempted in assay.
But wedded men ne connen no mesure,
Whan that they finde a patient creature.

Wif, quod this markis, ye han herd or this
My peple sikely beren our mariage,
And namely sin my sone yboren is,
Now is it werse than ever in al our age :
The murmur sleth myn herte and my corage,
For to myn eres cometh the vois so smerte,
That it wel nie destroyed hath myn herte.

Now say they thus, whan Walter is agon,
Than shal the blood of Janicle succede,
And ben our lord, for other han we non :
Swiche wordes sayn my peple, it is no drede.
Wel ought I of swiche murmur taken hede,
For certainly I drede al swiche sentence,
Though they not plainen in myn audience.

I wolde live in pees, if that I might :
Wherfore I am disposed utterly,
As I his suster served er by night,
Right so thinke I to serve him prively.
This warne I you, that ye not sodenly
Out of yourself for no wo shuld outraie,
Beth patient, and therof I you praie.

I have, quod she, sayd thus and ever shal,
I wol no thing, ne n'ill no thing certain,
But as you list : not greveth me at al,
Though that my doughter and my sone be slain
At your commandement : that is to sain,
I have not had no part of children twein,
But first sikenesse, and after wo and peine.

Ye ben my lord, doth with your owen thing
Right as you list, asketh no rede of me :
For as I left at home al my clothing
Whan I came first to you, right so (quod she)
Left I my will and al my libertee,
And toke your clothing : wherfore I you prey,
Doth your plesance, I wol youre lust obey.

And certes, if I hadde prescience
Your will to know, er ye your lust me told,
I wold it do withouten negligence :
But now I wote your lust, and what ye wold,
All your plesance ferme and stable I hold,
For wist I that my deth might do you ese,
Right gladly wold I dien, you to plese.

Deth may not maken no comparisoun
Unto your love. And whan this markis say
The constance of his wif, he cast adoun
His eyen two, and wondreth how she may
In patience suffer al this array :
And forth he goth with drery contenance,
But to his herte it was ful gret plesance.

This ugly sergeant in the same wise
That he hire doughter caughte, right so he
(Or werse, if men can any werse devise)
Hath hent hire sone, that ful was of beautee :
And ever in on so patient was she,
That she no chere made of hevinesse,
But kist hire sone and after gan it blesse.

Save this she praied him, if that he might,
Hire litel sone he wold in erthe grave,
His tendre limmes, delicat to sight,
Fro foules and fro bestes for to save.
But she non answer of him mighte have,
He went his way, as him no thing ne rought,
But to Boloigne he tendrely it brought.

This markis wondreth ever lenger the more
Upon hire patience, and if that he
Ne hadde sothly knowen therbefore,
That parfitly hire children loved she,
He wold han wend that of som subtiltee
And of malice, or for cruel corage,
That she had suffred this with sad visage.

But wel he knew, that next himself, certain
She loved hire children best in every wise.
But now of women wold I asken fayn,
If thise assaies mighten not suffise;
What coud a sturdy husbond more devise
To preve hire wifhood, and hire stedfastnesse,
And he continuing ever in sturdinesse?

But ther ben folk of swiche condition,
That, whan they han a certain purpos take,
They can not stint of hir intention,
But, right as they were bounden to a stake,
They wol not of hir firste purpos slake:
Right so this markis fully hath purposed
To tempt his wif, as he was first disposed.

He waiteth, if by word or contenance
That she to him was changed of corage:
But never coud he finden variance,
She was ay on in herte and in visage,
And ay the further that she was in age,
The more trewe (if that it were possible)
She was to him in love, and more penible.

For which it semed thus, that of hem two
Ther was but o will; for as Walter lest,
The same lust was hire plesance also;
And God be thanked, all fell for the best.
She shewed wel, for no worldly unrest
A wif, as of hireself, no thing ne sholde
Wille in effect, but as hire husbond wolde.

The sclandre of Walter wonder wide spradde,
That of a cruel herte he wikkedly,
For he a poure woman wedded hadde,
Hath murdred both his children prively:
Swich murmur was among hem comunly.
No wonder is: for to the peples ere
Ther came no word, but that they murdred were.

For which ther as his peple therbefore
Had loved him wel, the sclandre of his diffame
Made hem that they him hateden therfore:
To ben a murdrour is an hateful name.
But natheles, for ernest ne for game,
He of his cruel purpos n'olde stente,
To tempt his wif was sette all his entente.

Whan that his doughter twelf yere was of age,
He to the court of Rome, in subtil wise
Enformed of his will, sent his message,
Commanding him, swiche billes to devise,
As to his cruel purpos may suffise,
How that the pope, as for his peples rest,
Bade him to wed another, if him lest.

I say he bade, they shulden contrefete
The popes bulles, making mention
That he hath leve his firste wif to lete,
As by the popes dispensation,
To stinten rancour and dissension
Betwix his peple and him: thus spake the bull,
The which they han publisshed at the full.

The rude peple, as no wonder is,
Wenden ful wel, that it had ben right so:
But whan thise tidings came to Grisildis,
I deme that hire herte was ful of wo;
But she ylike sad for evermo
Disposed was, this humble creature,
The adversitee of fortune al to endure;

Abiding ever his lust and his plesance,
To whom that she was yeven, herte and al,
As to hire veray worldly suffisance.
But shortly if this storie tell I shal,
This markis writen hath in special
A lettre, in which he sheweth his entente,
And secretly he to Boloigne it sente,

To the erl of Pavie, which that hadde tho
Wedded his suster, prayed he specially
To bringen home agein his children two
In honourable estat al openly:
But o thing he him prayed utterly,
That he to no wight, though men wold enquere,
Shulde not tell whos children that they were,

But say, the maiden shuld ywedded be
Unto the markis of Saluces anon.
And as this erl was prayed, so did he,
For at day sette he on his way is gon
Toward Saluces, and lordes many on
In rich arraie, this maiden for to gide,
Hire yonge brother riding hire beside.

Arraied was toward hire mariage
This fresshe maiden, ful of gemmes clere,
Hire brother, which that seven yere was of age,
Arraied eke ful fresh in his manere:
And thus in gret noblesse and with glad chere
Toward Saluces shaping hir journay
Fro day to day they riden in hir way.

PARS QUINTA.

Among al this, after his wicked usage,
This markis yet his wif to tempten more
To the uttereste prefe of hire corage,
Fully to have experience and lore,
If that she were as stedefast as before,
He on a day in open audience
Ful boistously hath said hire this sentence:

Certes, Grisilde, I had ynough plesance
To han you to my wif, for your goodnesse,
And for your trouthe, and for your obeysance,
Not for your linage, ne for your richesse,
But now know I in veray sothfastnesse,
That in gret lordship, if I me wel avise,
Ther is gret servitude in sondry wise.

I may not don, as every ploughman may:
My peple me constreineth for to take
Another wif, and crien day by day;

And eke the pope rancour for to slake
Consenteth it, that dare I undertake :
And trewely, thus moche I wol you say,
My newe wif is coming by the way.

Be strong of herte, and voide anon hire place,
And thilke dower that ye broughten me
Take it agen, I grant it of my grace.
Returneth to your fadres hous, (quod he)
No man may alway have prosperitee.
With even herte I rede you to endure
The stroke of fortune, or of aventure.

And she agen answerd in patience :
My lord, quod she, I wote, and wist alway,
How that betwixen your magnificence
And my poverte no wight ne can ne may
Maken comparison, it is no nay ;
I ne held me never digne in no manere
To be your wif, ne yet your chambercre.

And in this hous, ther ye me lady made,
(The highe God take I for my witnesse,
And all so wisly he my soule glad)
I never held me lady ne maistresse,
But humble servant to your worthinesse,
And ever shal, while that my lif may dure,
Aboven every worldly creature.

That ye so longe of your benignitee
Han holden me in honour and nobley,
Wheras I was not worthy for to be,
That thanke I God and you, to whom I prey
Foryelde it you, ther is no more to sey :
Unto my fader gladly wol I wende,
And with him dwell unto my lives ende ;

Ther I was fostred of a childe ful smal,
Til I be ded my lif ther wol I lede,
A widew clene in body, herte and al.
For sith I yave to you my maidenhede,
And am your trewe wif, it is no drede,
God shilde swiche a lordes wif to take
Another man to husbond or to make.

And of your newe wif, God of his grace
So graunte you wele and prosperite :
For I wol gladly yelden hire my place,
In which that I was blisful wont to be.
For sith it liketh you, my lord, (quod she)
That whilom weren all myn hertes rest,
That I shal gon, I wol go whan you lest.

But ther as ye me profre swiche dowaire
As I first brought, it is wel in my mind,
It were my wretched clothes, nothing faire,
The which to me were hard now for to find.
O goode God ! how gentil and how kind
Ye semed by your speche and your visage,
The day that maked was oure marriage !

But soth is said, algate I find it trewe,
For in effect it preved is on me,
Love is not old, as whan that it is newe.
But certes, lord, for non adversitee
To dien in this cas, it shal not be
That ever in word or werke I shal repent,
That I you yave min herte in hole entent.

My lord, ye wote, that in my fadres place
Ye dide me stripe out of my poure wede,
And richely ye clad me of your grace ;
To you brought I nought elles out of drede,
But faith, and nakednesse, and maidenhede ;
And here agen your clothing I restore,
And eke your wedding ring for evermore.

The remenant of your jeweles redy be
Within your chambre, I dare it safly sain :
Naked out of my fadres hous (quod she)
I came, and naked I mote turne again.
All your plesance wolde I folwe fain :
But yet I hope it be not your entent,
That I smokles out of your paleis went.

Ye coude not do so dishonest a thing,
That thilke wombe, in which your children lay,
Shulde before the peple, in my walking,
Be seen al bare : wherfore I you pray
Let me not like a worme go by the way :
Remembre you, min owen lord so dere,
I was your wif, though I unworthy were.

Wherfore in guerdon of my maidenhede,
Which that I brought and not agen I bere,
As vouchesauf to yeve me to my mede
But swiche a smok as I was wont to were,
That I therwith may wrie the wombe of hire
That was your wif : and here I take my leve
Of you, min owen lord, lest I you greve.

The smok, quod he, that thou hast on thy bake,
Let it be still, and bere it forth with thee.
But wel unnethes thilke word he spake,
But went his way for routhe and for pitee.
Before the folk hireselven stripeth she,
And in hire smok, with foot and hed al bare,
Toward hire fadres hous forth is she fare.

The folk hire folwen weping in hir wey,
And fortune ay they cursen as they gon :
But she fro weping kept hire eyen drey,
Ne in this time word ne spake she non.
Hire fader, that this tiding herd anon,
Curseth the day and time, that nature
Shope him to bon a lives creature.

For out of doute this olde poure man
Was ever in suspect of hire mariage :
For ever he demed, sin it first began,
That whan the lord fulfilled had his corage,
Him wolde thinke it were a disparage
To his estat, so lowe for to alight,
And voiden hire as sone as ever he might.

Agein his doughter hastily goth he,
(For he by noise of folk knew hire coming)
And with hire olde cote, as it might be,
He covereth hire ful sorwefully weping :
But on hire body might he it not bring,
For rude was the cloth, and more of age
By daies fele than at hire mariage.

Thus with hire fader for a certain space
Dwelleth this flour of wifly patience,
That nother by hire wordes ne hire face,
Beforn the folk, ne eke in hir absence,
Ne shewed she that hire was don offence,
Ne of hire high estat no remembrance
Ne hadde she, as by hire contenance.

No wonder is, for in hire gret estat
Hire gost was ever in pleine humilitee ;
No tendre mouth, no herte delicat,

No pompe, no semblant of realtee ;
But ful of patient benignitee,
Discrete, and prideles, ay honourable,
And to hire husbond ever meke and stable.

Men speke of Job, and most for his humblesse,
As clerkes, whan hem list, can wel endite,
Namely of men, but as in sothfastnesse,
Though clerkes preisen women but a lite,
Ther can no man in humblesse him acquite
As woman can, ne can be half so trewe
As women ben, but it be falle of newe.

PARS SEXTA.

Fro Boloigne is this erl of Pavie come,
Of which the fame up sprang to more and lesse :
And to the peples eres all and some
Was couth eke, that a newe markisesse
He with him brought, in swiche pomp and richesse,
That never was ther seen with mannes eye
So noble array in al West Lumbardie.

The markis, which that shope and knew all this,
Er that this erl was come, sent his message
For thilke poure sely Grisildis ;
And she with humble herte and glad visage,
Not with no swollen thought in hire corage,
Came at his hest, and on hire knees hire sette,
And reverently and wisely she him grette.

Grisilde, (quod he) my will is utterly,
This maiden, that shal wedded be to me,
Received be to-morwe as really
As it possible is in myn hous to be :
And eke that every wight in his degree
Have his estat in sitting and service,
And high plesance, as I can best devise.

I have no woman suffisant certain
The chambres for to array in ordinance
After my lust, and therfore wolde I fain,
That thin were all swiche manere governance :
Thou knowest eke of old all my plesance ;
Though thin array be bad, and evil besey,
Do thou thy devoir at the leste wey.

Not only, lord, that I am glad (quod she)
To don your lust, but I desire also
You for to serve and plese in my degree,
Withouten fainting, and shal evermo :
Ne never for no wele, ne for no wo,
Ne shal the gost within myn herte stente
To love you best with all my trewe entente.

And with that word she gan the hous to dight,
And tables for to sette, and beddes make,
And peined hire to don all that she might,
Praying the chambereres for Goddes sake
To hasten hem, and faste swepe and shake,
And she the moste serviceable of all
Hath every chambre arraied, and his hall.

Abouten undern gan this erl alight,
That with him brought thise noble children twey ;
For which the peple ran to see the sight
Of hir array, so richely besey :
And than at erst amonges hem they sey,
That Walter was no fool, though that him lest
To change his wif ; for it was for the best.

For she is fairer, as they demen all,
Than is Grisilde, and more tendre of age,
And fairer fruit betwene hem shulde fall,
And more plesant for hire high linage :
Hire brother eke so faire was of visage,
That hem to seen the peple hath caught plesance,
Commending now the markis governance.

O stormy peple, unsad and ever untrewe,
And undiscrete, and changing as a fane,
Delighting ever in rombel that is newe,
For like the mone waxen ye and wane :
Ay ful of clapping, dere ynough a jane,
Your dome is fals, your constance evil preveth,
A ful gret fool is he that on you leveth.

Thus saiden sade folk in that citee,
Whan that the peple gased up and doun :
For they were glad, right for the noveltee,
To have a newe lady of hir toun.
No more of this make I now mentioun,
But to Grisilde agen I wol me dresse,
And telle hire constance, and hire besinesse.

Ful besy was Grisilde in every thing,
That to the feste was appertinent ;
Right naught was she abaist of hire clothing,
Though it were rude, and somdel eke to-rent,
But with glad chere to the yate is went
With other folk, to grete the markisesse,
And after that doth forth hire besinesse.

With so glad chere his gestes she receiveth,
And conningly everich in his degree,
That no defaute no man apperceiveth,
But ay they wondren what she mighte be,
That in so poure array was for to see,
And coude swiche honour and reverence,
And worthily they preisen hire prudence.

In all this mene while she ne stent
This maide and eke hire brother to commend
With all hire herte in ful benigne entent,
So wel, that no man coud hire preise amend :
But at the last whan that thise lordes wend
To sitten doun to mete, he gan to call
Grisilde, as she was besy in the hall.

Grisilde, (quod he, as it were in his play)
How liketh thee my wif, and hire beautee ?
Right wel, my lord, quod she, for in good fay,
A fairer saw I never non than she :
I pray to God yeve you prosperitee ;
And so I hope, that he wol to you send
Plesance ynough unto your lives end.

O thing beseche I you and warne also,
That ye ne prikke with no turmenting
This tendre maiden, as ye han do mo :
For she is fostred in hire norishing
More tendrely, and to my supposing
She mighte not adversitee endure,
As coude a poure fostred creature.

And whan this Walter saw hire patience,
Hire glade chere, and no malice at all,
And he so often hadde hire don offence,
And she ay sade and constant as a wall,
Continuing ever hire innocence over all,
This sturdy markis gan his herte dresse
To rewe upon hire wifly stedefastnesse.

This is ynough, Grisilde min, quod he,
Be now no more agast, ne evil apaid,
I have thy faith and thy benignitee,
As wel as ever woman was, assaid
In gret estat, and pourelich arraied:
Now know I, dere wif, thy stedefastnesse,
And hire in armes toke, and gan to kesse.

And she for wonder toke of it no kepe;
She herde not what thing he to hire said:
She ferde as she had stert out of a slepe,
Til she out of hire masednesse abraid.
Grisilde, quod he, by God that for us deid,
Thou art my wif, non other I ne have,
Ne never had, as God my soule save.

This is thy doughter, which thou hast supposed
To be my wif; that other faithfully
Shal be min heir, as I have ay disposed;
Thou bare hem of thy body trewely:
At Boloigne have I kept hem prively:
Take hem agen, for now maist thou not say,
That thou hast lorn non of thy children tway.

And folk, that otherwise han said of me,
I warne hem wel, that I have don this dede
For no malice, ne for no crueltee,
But for to assay in thee thy womanhede:
And not to slee my children (God forbede)
But for to kepe hem prively and still,
Til I thy purpos knew, and all thy will.

Whan she this herd aswoune doun she falleth
For pitous joye, and after hire swouning
She bothe hire yonge children to hire calleth,
And in hire armes pitously weping
Embraceth hem, and tendrely kissing
Ful like a moder with hire salte teres
She bathed both hir visage and hir heres.

O, which a pitous thing it was to see
Hire swouning, and hire humble vois to here!
Grand mercy, lord, God thank it you (quod she)
That ye han saved me my children dere:
Now rekke I never to be ded right here,
Sin I stond in your love, and in your grace,
No force of deth, ne whan my spirit pace.

O tendre, o dere, o yonge children mine,
Your woful mother wened stedfastly,
That cruel houndes, or som foul vermine
Had eten you; but God of his mercy,
And your benigne fader tendrely
Hath don you kepe: and in that same stound
Al sodenly she swapt adoun to ground.

And in hire swough so sadly holdeth she
Hire children two, whan she gan hem embrace,
That with gret sleight and gret difficultee
The children from hire arm they gan arrace
O! many a tere on many a pitous face
Doun ran of hem that stoden hire beside,
Unnethe abouten hire might they abide.

Walter hire gladeth, and hire sorwe slaketh,
She riseth up abashed from hire trance,
And every wight hire joye and feste maketh,
Til she hath caught agen hire contenance.
Walter hire doth so faithfully plesance,
That it was deintee for to seen the chere
Betwix hem two, sin they ben met in fere.

Thise ladies, whan that they hir time sey,
Han taken hire, and into chambre gon,
And stripen hire out of hire rude arrey,
And in a cloth of gold that brighte shone,
With a coroune of many a riche stone
Upon hire hed, they into hall hire broughte:
And ther she was honoured as hire ought.

Thus hath this pitous day a blisful end;
For every man, and woman, doth his might
This day in mirth and revel to dispend,
Til on the welkin shone the sterres bright:
For more solempne in every mannes sight
This feste was, and greter of costage,
Than was the revel of hire mariage.

Ful many a yere in high prosperitee
Liven thise two in concord and in rest,
And richely his doughter maried he
Unto a lord, on of the worthiest
Of all Itaille, and than in pees and rest
His wives fader in his court he kepeth,
Til that the soule out of his body crepeth.

His sone succedeth in his heritage,
In rest and pees, after his fadres day:
And fortunat was eke in mariage,
Al put he not his wif in gret assay:
This world is not so strong, it is no nay,
As it hath ben in olde times yore,
And herkneth, what this auctour saith therfore.

This story is said, not for that wives shuld
Folwe Grisilde, as in humilitee,
For it were importable, tho they wold;
But for that every wight in his degree
Shulde be constant in adversitee,
As was Grisilde, therfore Petrark writeth
This storie, which with high stile he enditeth.

For sith a woman was so patient
Unto a mortal man, wel more we ought
Receiven all in gree that God us sent.
For gret skill is he preve that he wrought:
But he ne tempteth no man that he bought,
As saith seint Jame, if ye his pistell rede;
He preveth folk al day, it is no drede:

And suffreth us, as for our exercise,
With sharpe scourges of adversitee
Ful often to be bete in sondry wise;
Not for to know our will, for certes he,
Or we were borne, knew all our freeletee;
And for our best is all his governance;
Let us than live in vertuous suffrance.

But o word, lordings, herkeneth, or I go:
It were ful hard to finden now adayes
In all a toun Grisildes three or two:
For if that they were put to swiche assayes,
The gold of hem hath now so bad alayes
With bras, that though the coine be faire at eye,
It wolde rather brast atwo than plie.

For which here, for the wives love of Bathe,
Whos lif and al hire secte God maintene
In high maistrie, and elles were it scathe,
I wol with lusty herte fresshe and grene,
Say you a song to gladen you, I wene:
And let us stint of ernestful matere.
Herkneth my song, that saith in this manere.

Grisilde is ded, and eke hire patience,
And both at ones buried in Itaille :
For which I crie in open audience,
No wedded man so hardy be to assaille
His wives patience, in trust to find
Grisildes, for in certain he shal faille.

O noble wives, ful of highe prudence,
Let non humilitee your tonges naile :
Ne let no clerk have cause or diligence
To write of you a storie of swiche mervaille,
As of Grisildis patient and kinde,
Lest Chichevache you swalwe in hir entraille.

Folweth ecco, that holdeth no silence,
But ever answereth at the countretaille :
Beth not bedaffed for your innocence,
But sharply taketh on you the governaille :
Emprenteth wel this lesson in your minde,
For comun profit, sith it may availle.

Ye archewives, stondeth ay at defence,
Sin ye be strong, as is a gret camaille,
Ne suffreth not, that men do you offence.
And sclendre wives, feble as in bataille,
Beth egre as is a tigre yond in Inde ;
Ay clappeth as a mill, I you counsaille.

Ne drede hem not, doth hem no reverence,
For though thin husbond armed be in maille,
The arwes of thy crabbed eloquence
Shal perce his brest, and eke his aventaille :
In jalousie I rede eke thou him binde,
And thou shalt make him couche as doth a quaille.

If thou be faire, ther folk ben in presence
Shew thou thy visage, and thin apparaille :
If thou be foule, be free of thy dispence,
To get thee frendes ay do thy travaille :
Be ay of chere as light as lefe on linde,
And let him care, and wepe, and wringe, and waille.

THE MARCHANTES TALE.

THE MARCHANTES PROLOGUE.

Weping and wailing, care and other sorwe
I have ynough, on even and on morwe,
Quod the marchant, and so have other mo,
That wedded ben ; I trowe that it be so :
For wel I wot it fareth so by me.
I have a wif, the werste that may be,
For though the fend to hire ycoupled were,
She wolde him overmatche I dare wel swere.
What shulde I you rehersc in special
Hire high malice ? she is a shrew at al.
Ther is a long and a large difference
Betwix Grisildes grete patience,
And of my wif the passing cruelte.
Were I unbounden, all so mote I the,
I wolde never eft comen in the snare.
We wedded men live in sorwe and care,
Assay it who so wol, and he shal finde
That I say soth, by seint Thomas of Inde,
As for the more part, I say not alle ;
God shilde that it shulde so befalle.
A, good sire hoste, I have ywedded be
Thise monethes two, and more not parde ;
And yet I trowe that he, that all his lif
Wifles hath ben, though that men wolde him rife
Into the herte, ne coude in no manere
Tellen so much sorwe, as I you here
Coud tellen of my wives cursednesse.
Now, quod our hoste, marchant, so God you blesse,
Sin ye so mochel knowen of that art,
Ful hertely I pray you tell us part.
Gladly, quod he, but of min owen sore
For sory herte I tellen may no more.

THE MARCHANTES TALE.

Whilom ther was dwelling in Lumbardie
A worthy knight, that born was at Pavie
In which he lived in gret prosperitee ;
And sixty yere a wifles man was he,
And folwed ay his bodily delit
On women, ther as was his appetit,
As don thise fooles that ben seculere.
And whan that he was passed sixty yere,
Were it for holinesse or for dotage,
I cannot sain, but swiche a gret corage
Hadde this knight to ben a wedded man,
That day and night he doth all that he can
To espien, wher that he might wedded be ;
Praying our lord to granten him, that he
Mighte ones knowen of that blisful lif,
That is betwix an husbond and his wif,
And for to live under that holy bond,
With which God firste man and woman bond.
Non other lif (said he) is worth a bene :
For wedlok is so esy and so clene,
That in this world it is a paradise.
Thus saith this olde knight, that was so wise.
And certainly, as soth as God is king,
To take a wif, it is a glorious thing,
And namely whan a man is old and hore,
Than is a wif the fruit of his tresore ;
Than shuld he take a yong wif and a faire,
On which he might engendren him an heire,
And lede his lif in joye and in solas,
Wheras thise bachelers singen alas,
Whan that they finde any adversitee
In love, which n'is but childish vanitee.
And trewely it sit wel to be so,
That bachelers have often peine and wo :
On brotel ground they bilde, and brotelnesse
They finden, whan they wenen sikernesse :
They live but as a bird or as a beste,
In libertee and under non areste,
Ther as a wedded man in his estat
Liveth a lif blisful and ordinat,
Under the yoke of mariage ybound :
Wel may his herte in joye and blisse abound.
For who can be so buxom as a wif ?
Who is so trewe and eke so ententif

To kepe him, sike and hole, as is his make?
For wele or wo she n'ill him not forsake:
She n'is not wery him to love and serve,
Though that he lie bedrede til that he sterve.
And yet som clerkes sain, it is not so,
Of which he Theophrast is on of tho:
What force though Theophrast list for to lie?
Ne take no wif, quod he, for husbondrie,
As for to spare in houshold thy dispence:
A trewe servant doth more diligence
Thy good to kepe, than doth thin owen wif,
For she wol claimen half part al hire lif.
And if that thou be sike, so God me save,
Thy veray frendes or a trewe knave
Wol kepe thee bet than she, that waiteth ay
After thy good, and hath don many a day.
This sentence, and an hundred things werse
Writeth this man ther God his bones curse.
But take no kepe of al swiche vanitee,
Defieth Theophrast, and herkeneth me.
A wif is Goddes yefte veraily;
All other maner yeftes hardely,
As londes, rentes, pasture, or commune,
Or mebles, all ben yeftes of fortune,
That passen as a shadow on the wall:
But drede thou not, if plainly speke I shal,
A wif wol last and in thin hous endure,
Wel lenger than thee list paraventure.
Mariage is a ful gret sacrament;
He which that hath no wif I hold him shent;
He liveth helples, and all desolat:
(I speke of folk in seculer estat)
And herkneth why, I say not this for nought,
That woman is for mannes help ywrought.
The highe God, whan he had Adam maked,
And saw him al alone belly naked,
God of his grete goodnesse saide than,
Let us now make an helpe unto this man
Like to himself, and than he made him Eve.
Here may ye see, and hereby may ye preve,
That a wif is mannes helpe and his comfort,
His paradis terrestre and his disport:
So buxom and so vertuous is she,
They mosten nedes live in unitee:
O flesh they ben, and o flesh, as I gesse,
Hath but on herte in wele and in distresse.
A wif! a! seinte Marie, *benedicite*,
How might a man have any adversite
That hath a wif? certes I cannot seye.
The blisse the which that is betwix hem tweye
Ther may no tonge telle or herte thinke.
If he be poure, she helpeth him to swinke;
She kepeth his good, and wasteth never a del;
All that hire husbond doth, hire liketh wel;
She saith not ones nay, whan he saith ye;
Do this, saith he; al redy, sire, saith she.
O blisful ordre, o wedlok precious,
Thou art so mery, and eke so vertuous,
And so commended, and approved eke,
That every man that holt him worth a leke,
Upon his bare knees ought all his lif
Thanken his God, that him hath sent a wif,
Or elles pray to God him for to send
A wif, to last unto his lives end.
For than his lif is set in sikernesse,
He may not be deceived, as I gesse,
So that he werche after his wives rede;
Than may he boldly beren up his hede,
They ben so trewe, and therwithal so wise.
For which, if thou wilt werchen as the wise,
Do alway so, as women wol thee rede.
Lo how that Jacob, as thise clerkes rede,
By good conseil of his mother Rebekke
Bounde the kiddes skin about his nekke;
For which his fadres benison he wan.
Lo Judith, as the storie eke tell can,
By good conseil she Goddes peple kept,
And slow him Holofernes while he slept.
Lo Abigail, by good conseil how she
Saved hire husbond Nabal, whan that he
Shuld han be slain. And loke, Hester also
By good conseil delivered out of wo
The peple of God, and made him Mardocheo
Of Assuere enhaunsed for to be.
Ther n'is no thing in gree superlatif
(As saith Senek) above an humble wif.
Suffer thy wives tonge, as Caton bit,
She shal command, and thou shalt suffren it,
And yet she wol obey of curtesie.
A wif is keper of thin husbondrie:
Wel may the sike man bewaile and wepe,
Ther as ther is no wif the hous to kepe.
I warne thee, if wisely thou wilt werche,
Love wel thy wif, as Crist loveth his cherche:
If thou lovest thyself, love thou thy wif.
No man hateth his flesh, but in his lif
He fostreth it, and therfore bid I thee
Cherish thy wif, or thou shalt never the.
Husbond and wif, what so men jape or play,
Of worldly folk holden the siker way:
They ben so knit, ther may non harm betide,
And namely upon the wives side.
For which this January, of whom I told,
Considered hath within his dayes old
The lusty lif, the vertuous quiete,
That is in mariage hony-swete.
And for his frendes on a day he sent
To tellen hem th' effect of his entent.
With face sad, his tale he hath hem told:
He sayde, frendes, I am hore and old,
And almost (God wot) on my pittes brinke,
Upon my soule somwhat most I thinke.
I have my body folily dispended,
Blessed be God that it shal ben amended:
For I wol ben certain a wedded man,
And that anon in all the hast I can.
Unto som maiden, faire and tendre of age,
I pray you shapeth for my mariage
All sodenly, for I wol not abide:
And I wol fonde to espien on my side,
To whom I may be wedded hastily.
But for as moche as ye ben more than I,
Ye shullen rather swiche a thing espien
Than I, and wher me beste were to allien.
But o thing warn I you, my frendes dere,
I wol non old wif han in no manere:
She shal not passen twenty yere certain.
Old fish and yonge flesh wold I have fain.
Bet is (quod he) a pike than a pikerel,
And bet than old beef is the tendre veel.
I wol no woman thirty yere of age,
It is but benestraw and gret forage.
And eke thise olde widewes (God it wote)
They connen so moch craft on Wades bote,
So mochel broken harm whan that hem lest,
That with hem shuld I never live in rest.
For sondry scoles maken subtil clerkes;
Woman of many scoles half a clerk is.
But certainly, a yong thing men may gie,
Right as men may warm wax with handes plie.

Wherfore I say you plainly in a clause,
I wol non old wif han right for this cause.
For if so were I hadde swiche meschance,
That I in hire ne coude have no plesance,
Than shuld I lede my lif in avoutrie,
And so streight to the devil whan I die.
Ne children shuld I non upon hire geten:
Yet were me lever houndes had me eten,
Than that min heritage shulde fall
In straunge hondes: and this I tell you all.
I dote not, I wot the cause why
Men shulden wedde: and furthermore wot I,
Ther speketh many a man of mariage,
That wot no more of it than wot my page,
For which causes a man shuld take a wif.
If he ne may not liven chast his lif,
Take him a wif with gret devotion,
Because of leful procreation
Of children, to the honour of God above,
And not only for paramour or love;
And for they shulden lecherie eschue,
And yeld hir dette whan that it is due:
Or for that eche of hem shuld helpen other
In meschefe, as a suster shal the brother,
And live in chastitee ful holily.
But, sires, (by your leve) that am not I,
For God be thanked, I dare make avaunt,
I fele my limmes stark and suffisant
To don all that a man belongeth to:
I wot myselven best what I may do.
Though I be hoor, I fare as doth a tre,
That blosmeth er the fruit ywoxen be;
The blosmy tre n'is neither drie ne ded:
I fele me no wher hoor but on my hed.
Min herte and all my limmes ben as grene,
As laurer thurgh the yere is for to sene.
And sin that ye han herd all min entent,
I pray you to my will ye wolde assent.
Diverse men diversely him told
Of mariage many ensamples old;
Som blamed it, som praised it certain;
But atte laste, shortly for to sain,
(As all day falleth altercation
Betwixen frendes in disputison)
Ther fell a strif betwix his brethren two,
Of which that on was cleped Placebo,
Justinus sothly called was that other.
Placebo sayd; O January brother,
Ful litel nede han ye, my lord so dere,
Conseil to aske of any that is here:
But that ye ben so ful of sapience,
That you ne liketh for your high prudence,
To weiven fro the word of Salomon.
This word sayd he unto us everich on;
Werke alle thing by conseil, thus sayd he,
And than ne shalt thou not repenten thee.
But though that Salomon spake swiche a word,
Min owen dere brother and my lord,
So wisly God my soule bringe at rest,
I hold your owen conseil is the best.
For, brother min, take of me this motif,
I have now ben a court-man all my lif,
And God it wot, though I unworthy be,
I have stonden in ful gret degree
Abouten lordes of ful high estat:
Yet had I never with non of hem debat,
I never hem contraried trewely.
I wot wel that my lord can more than I;
What that he saith, I hold it firme and stable,
I say the same, or elles thing semblable.
A ful gret fool is any conseillour,
That serveth any lord of high honour,
That dare presume, or ones thinken it,
That his conseil shuld passe his lordes wit.
Nay, lordes be no fooles by my fay.
Ye han yourselven shewed here to-day
So high sentence, so holily, and wel,
That I consent, and confirme every del
Your wordes all, and your opinioun.
By God ther n'is no man in all this toun
Ne in Itaille, coud bet han ysayd:
Crist holt him of this conseil wel apaid.
And trewely it is an high corage
Of any man that stopen is in age,
To take a young wif, by my fader kin:
Your herte hongeth on a joly pin.
Doth now in this matere right as you lest,
For finally I hold it for the best.
Justinus, that ay stille sat and herd,
Right in this wise he to Placebo answerd.
Now, brother min, be patient I pray,
Sin ye han said, and herkneth what I say.
Senek among his other wordes wise
Saith, that a man ought him right wel avise,
To whom he yeveth his lond or his catel.
And sith I ought avisen me right wel,
To whom I yeve my good away fro me,
Wel more I ought avisen me, parde,
To whom I yeve my body: for alway
I warne you wel it is no childes play
To take a wif without avisement.
Men must enqueren (this is min assent)
Wheder she be wise and sobre, or dronkelewe,
Or proud, or elles other waies a shrew,
A chidester, or a wastour of thy good,
Or riche or poure, or elles a man is wood.
Al be it so, that no man finden shal
Non in this world, that trotteth hol in al,
Ne man, ne beste, swiche as men can devise,
But natheles it ought ynough suffice
With any wif, if so were that she had
Mo goode thewes, than hire vices bad:
And all this axeth leiser to enquere.
For God it wot, I have wept many a tere
Ful prively, sin that I had a wif.
Praise who so wol a wedded mannes lif,
Certain I find in it but cost and care,
And observances of alle blisses bare.
And yet, God wot, my neighebours aboute,
And namely of women many a route,
Sain that I have the moste stedefast wif,
And eke the mekest on that bereth lif.
But I wot best, wher wringeth me my sho.
Ye may for me right as you liketh do.
Aviseth you, ye ben a man of age,
How that ye entren into mariage;
And namely with a yong wif and a faire.
By him that made water, fire, erthe, and aire,
The yongest man, that is in all this route,
Is besy ynow to bringen it aboute
To han his wif alone, trusteth me:
Ye shul not plesen hire fully yeres three,
This is to sain, to don hire ful plesance.
A wif axeth ful many an observance.
I pray you that ye be not evil apaid.
Wel, quod this January, and hast thou saide!
Straw for Senek, and straw for thy proverbes,
I counte not a panier ful of herbes
Of scole termes; wiser men than thou,
As thou hast herd, assented here right now

To my purpos : Placebo, what saye ye ?
I say it is a cursed man, quod he,
That letteth matrimoine sikerly.
And with that word they risen sodenly,
And ben assented fully, that he sholde
Be wedded whan him list, and wher he wolde.
High fantasie and curious besinesse
Fro day to day gan in the soule empresse
Of January about his mariage.
Many a faire shap, and many a faire visage
Ther passeth thurgh his herte night by night.
As who so toke a mirrour polished bright,
And set it in a comune market place,
Than shuld he see many a figure pace
By his mirrour, and in the same wise
Gan January in with his thought devise
Of maidens, which that dwelten him beside :
He wiste not wher that he might abide.
For if that on have beautee in hire face,
Another stont so in the peples grace
For hire sadnesse and hire benignitee,
That of the peple the gretest vois hath she :
And som were riche and hadden a bad name.
But natheles, betwix ernest and game,
He at the last appointed him on on,
And let all other from his herte gon,
And chees hire of his owen auctoritee,
For love is blind all day, and may not see.
And whan that he was in his bed ybrought,
He purtreied in his herte and in his thought
Hire freshe beautee, and hire age tendre,
Hire middel smal, hire armes long and sclendre,
Hire wise governance, hire gentillesse,
Hire womanly bering, and hire sadnesse.
And whan that he on hire was condescended,
Him thought his chois it might not ben amended ;
For whan that he himself concluded had,
Him thought eche other mannes wit so bad
That impossible it were to replie
Again his chois ; this was his fantasie.
His frendes sent he to, at his instance,
And praied hem to don him that plesance,
That hastily they wolden to him come ;
He wolde abregge hir labour all and some :
Neded no more to hem to go ne ride,
He was appointed ther he wolde abide.
Placebo came, and eke his frendes sone,
And alderfirst he bade hem all a bone,
That non of hem non argumentes make
Again the purpos that he hath ytake :
Which purpos was plesant to God (said he)
And veray ground of his prosperitee.
He said, ther was a maiden in the toun,
Which that of beautee hadde gret renoun,
Al were it so, she were of smal degree,
Sufficeth him hire youth and hire beautee :
Which maid (he said) he wold han to his wif
To lede in ese and holinesse his lif :
And thanked God, that he might han hire all,
That no wight with his blisse parten shall :
And praied hem to labour in this nede,
And shapen that he faille not to spede.
For than, he sayd, his spirit was at ese ;
Than is (quod he) nothing may me displese,
Save o thing pricketh in my conscience,
The which I wol reherse in your presence.
I have (quod he) herd said ful yore ago,
Ther may no man han parfite blisses two,
This is to say, in erthe and eke in heven.
For though he kepe him fro the sinnes seven,
And eke from every branch of thilke tree,
Yet is ther so parfit felicitee,
And so gret ese and lust in mariage,
That ever I am agast now in min age,
That I shal leden now so mery a lif,
So delicat, withouten wo or strif,
That I shal han min heven in erthe here.
For sin that veray heven is bought so dere
With tribulation and gret penance,
How shuld I than, living in swiche plesance
As alle wedded men don with hir wives,
Come to the blisse, ther Crist eterne on live is ?
This is my drede, and ye, my brethren tweie,
Assoileth me this question I preie.
Justinus, which that hated his folie,
Answerd anon right in his japerie ;
And for he wold his longe tale abrege,
He wolde non auctoritee allege,
But sayde, sire, so ther be non obstacle
Other than this, God of his hie miracle,
And of his mercy may so for you werche,
That er ye have your rights of holy cherche,
Ye may repent of wedded mannes lif,
In which ye sain ther is no wo ne strif :
And elles God forbede, but if he sent
A wedded man his grace him to repent
Wel often, rather than a single man.
And therfore, sire, the best rede that I can,
Despeire you not, but haveth in memorie,
Paraventure she may be your purgatorie ;
She may be Goddes mene and Goddes whippe ;
Than shal your soule up unto heven skippe
Swifter than doth an arow of a bow.
I hope to God hereafter ye shal know,
That ther n'is non so gret felicitee
In mariage, ne never more shal be,
That you shal let of your salvation,
So that ye use, as skill is and reson,
The lustes of your wif attemprely,
And that ye plese hire nat to amorously :
And that ye kepe you eke from other sinne.
My tale is don, for my wit is but thinne.
Beth not agast hereof, my brother dere,
But let us waden out of this matere.
The wif of Bathe, if ye han understonde,
Of mariage, which ye now han in honde,
Declared hath ful wel in litel space :
Fareth now wel, God have you in his grace.
And with this word this Justine and his brother
Han take hir leve, and eche of hem of other.
And whan they saw that it must nedes be,
They wroughten so by sleighte and wise tretee,
That she this maiden, which that Maius hight,
As hastily as ever that she might,
Shal wedded be unto this January.
I trow it were to longe you to tary,
If I you told of every script and bond,
By which that she was feoffed in his lond ;
Or for to rekken of hire rich array.
But finally yeomen is the day,
That to the chirche bothe ben they went,
For to receive the holy sacrament.
Forth cometh the preest, with stole about his nekke,
And bade hire be like Sara and Rebekke,
In wisdome and in trouthe of mariage :
And sayd his orisons, as is usage,
And crouched hem, and bade God shuld hem blesse,
And made all siker ynow with holinesse.
Thus ben they wedded with solempnitee ;
And at the feste sitteth he and she

With other worthy folk upon the deis.
Al ful of joye and blisse is the paleis,
And ful of instruments, and of vitaille,
The moste deinteous of all Italle.
Beforn hem stood swiche instruments of soun,
That Orpheus, ne of Thebes Amphion,
Ne maden never swiche a melodie.
At every cours in came loude minstralcie,
That never Joab tromped for to here,
Ne he Theodomas yet half so clere
At Thebes, whan the citee was in doute.
Bacchus the win hem skinketh al aboute,
And Venus laugheth upon every wight,
(For January was become hire knight,
And wolde bothe assaien his corage
In libertee, and eke in mariage)
And with hire firebrond in hire hond aboute
Danceth before the bride and all the route.
And certainly I dare right wel say this,
Ymeneus, that God of wedding is,
Saw never his lif so mery a wedded man.
Hold thou thy pees, thou poet Marcian,
That writest us that ilke wedding mery
Of hire Philologie and him Mercurie,
And of the songes that the Muses songe:
To smal is both thy pen and eke thy tonge
For to descriven of this mariage.
Whan tendre youth hath wedded stouping age,
Ther is swiche mirth that it may not be writen;
Assaieth it yourself, than may ye witen
If that I lie or non in this matere.
Maius, that sit with so benigne a chere,
Hire to behold it semed faerie,
Quene Hester loked never with swiche an eye
On Assuere, so meke a look hath she,
I may you not devise all hire beautee;
But thus moch of hire beautee tell I may,
That she was like the brighte morwe of May
Fulfilled of all beautee, and plesance.
This January is ravished in a trance,
At every time he loketh in hire face,
But in his herte he gan hire to manace,
That he that night in armes wold hire streine
Harder than ever Paris did Heleine.
But natheles yet had he gret pitee
That thilke night offenden hire must he,
And thought, alas, o tendre creature,
Now wolde God ye mighten wel endure
All my corage, it is so sharpe and kene;
I am agast ye shal it nat sustene.
But God forbede, that I did all my might.
Now wolde God that it were waxen night,
And that the night wold lasten ever mo.
I wold that all this peple were ago.
And finally he doth all his labour,
As he best mighte, saving his honour,
To haste hem fro the mete in subtil wise.
The time came that reson was to rise,
And after that men dance, and drinken fast,
And spices all about the hous they cast,
And ful of joye and blisse is every man,
All but a squier, that highte Damian,
Which carf beforn the knight ful many a day:
He was so ravisht on his lady May,
That for the veray peine he was nie wood;
Almost he swelt, and swouned ther he stood:
So sore hath Venus hurt him with hire brond,
As that she bare it dancing in hire hond.
And to his bed he went him hastily;
No more of him as at this time speke I;
But ther I let him wepe ynow and plaine,
Til freshe May wol rewen on his peine.
O perilous fire, that in the bedstraw bredeth!
O famuler fo, that his service bedeth!
O servant traitour, false of holy hewe,
Like to the nedder in bosom slie untrewe,
God shelde us alle from your acquaintance!
O January, dronken in plesance
Of mariage, see how thy Damian,
Thin owen squier and thy boren man,
Entendeth for to do thee vilanie:
God grante thee thin homly fo to espie.
For in this world n'is werse pestilence,
Than homly fo, all day in thy presence.
Parformed hath the sonne his arke diurne,
No longer may the body of him sojourne
On the orisont, as in that latitude:
Night with his mantel, that is derke and rude,
Gan oversprede the Hemisperie aboute:
For which departed is this lusty route
Fro January, with thank on every side.
Home to hir houses lustily they ride,
Ther as they don hir thinges, as hem lest,
And whan they saw hir time gon to rest.
Sone after that this hastif January
Wol go to bed, he wol no longer tary.
He drinketh Ipocras, clarre, and vernage
Of spices hot, to encresen his corage:
And many a letuarie had he ful fine,
Swiche as the cursed monk dan Constantine
Hath written in his book *de Coitu*;
To ete hem all he wolde nothing eschue:
And to his privee frendes thus sayd he:
For Goddes love, as sone as it may be,
Let voiden all this hous in curteis wise.
And they han don right as he wol devise.
Men drinken, and the travers drawe anon;
The bride is brought a-bed as still as ston;
And whan the bed was with the preest yblessed,
Out of the chambre hath every wight him dressed,
And January hath fast in armes take
His freshe May, his paradis, his make.
He lulleth hire, he kisseth hire ful oft;
With thicke bristles of his berd unsoft,
Like to the skin of houndfish, sharp as brere,
(For he was shave al newe in his manere)
He rubbeth hire upon hire tendre face,
And soyde thus; Alas! I mote trespace
To you, my spouse, and you gretly offend,
Or time come that I wol doun descend.
But natheles considereth this, (quod he)
Ther n'is no werkman, whatsoever he be,
That may both werken wel and hastily:
This wol be don at leiser parfitly.
It is no force how longe that we play;
In trewe wedlok coupled be we tway;
And blessed be the yoke that we ben inne,
For in our actes may ther be no sinne.
A man may do no sinne with his wif,
Ne hurt himselven with his owen knif:
For we have leve to play us by the lawe.
Thus laboureth he, til that the day gan dawe,
And than he taketh a sop in fine clarre,
And upright in his bed than sitteth he.
And after that he sang ful loud and clere,
And kist his wif, and maketh wanton chere.
He was al coltish, ful of ragerie,
And ful of jergon, as a flecked pie.
The slacke skin about his necke shaketh,
While that he sang, so chanteth he and craketh

But God wot what that May thought in hire herte,
Whan she him saw up sitting in his sherte
In his night cap, and with his necke lene:
She praiseth not his playing worth a bene.
Than sayd he thus; my reste wol I take
Now day is come, I may no lenger wake;
And doun he layd his hed and slept til prime.
And afterward, whan that he saw his time,
Up riseth January, but freshe May
Held hire in chambre til the fourthe day,
As usage is of wives for the beste.
For every labour somtime moste han reste,
Or elles longe may he not endure;
This is to say, no lives creature,
Be it of fish, or brid, or best, or man.
Now wol I speke of woful Damian,
That langureth for love, as ye shul here;
Therfore I speke to him in this manere.
I say, O sely Damian, alas!
Answer to this demand, as in this cas,
How shalt thou to thy lady freshe May
Tellen thy wo? She wol alway say nay;
Eke if thou speke, she wol thy wo bewrein;
God be thin help, I can no better sein.
This sike Damian in Venus fire
So brenneth, that he dieth for desire;
For which he put his lif in aventure,
No lenger might he in this wise endure,
But prively a penner gan he borwe,
And in a lettre wrote he all his sorwe,
In manere of a complaint or a lay,
Unto his faire freshe lady May.
And in a purse of silk, heng on his sherte,
He hath it put, and layd it at his herte.
The mone that at none was thilke day
That January hath wedded freshe May
In ten of Taure, was into Cancer gliden;
So long hath Maius in hire chambre abiden,
As custome is unto thise nobles alle.
A bride shal not eten in the halle,
Til dayes four or three dayes at the leste
Ypassed ben, than let hire go to feste.
The fourthe day complete fro none to none,
Whan that the highe messe was ydone,
In halle sat this January and May,
As fresh as is the brighte somers day.
And so befel, how that this goode man
Remembred him upon this Damian,
And sayde; Seinte Marie, how may it be,
That Damian entendeth not to me?
Is he ay sike? or how may this betide?
His squiers, which that stoden ther beside,
Excused him, because of his siknesse,
Which letted him to don his besinesse:
Non other cause mighte make him tary.
That me forthinketh, quod this January;
He is a gentil squier by my trouthe,
If that he died, it were gret harme and routhe.
He is as wise, discret, and as secree,
As any man I wote of his degree,
And therto manly and eke servisable,
And for to ben a thrifty man right able.
But after mete as sone as ever I may
I wol myselfe visite him, and eke May,
To don him all the comfort that I can.
And for that word him blessed every man,
That of his bountee and his gentillesse
He wolde so comforten in siknesse
His squier, for it was a gentil dede.
Dame, quod this January, take good hede,
At after mete, ye with your women alle,
(Whan that ye ben in chambre out of this halle)
That all ye gon to see this Damian:
Doth him disport, he is a gentil man,
And telleth him that I wol him visite,
Have I no thing but rested me a lite:
And spede you faste, for I wol abide
Til that ye slepen faste by my side.
And with that word he gan unto him calle
A squier, that was marshal of his halle,
And told him certain thinges that he wolde.
This freshe May hath streight hire way yholde
With all hire women unto Damian.
Doun by his beddes side sit she than,
Comforting him as goodly as she may.
This Damian, whan that his time he say,
In secree wise, his purse, and eke his bill,
In which that he ywritten had his will,
Hath put into hire hond withouten more,
Save that he siked wonder depe and sore,
And softely to hire right thus sayd he;
Mercie, and that ye nat discover me:
For I am ded, if that this thing be kid.
This purse hath she in with hire bosome hid,
And went hire way; ye get no more of me;
But unto January ycome is she,
That on his beddes side sate ful soft.
He taketh hire, and kisseth hire ful oft:
And layd him doun to slepe, and that anon.
She feined hire, as that she muste gon
Ther as ye wote that every wight mot nede;
And whan she of this bill hath taken hede,
She rent it all to cloutes at the last,
And in the privee softely it cast.
Who studieth now but faire freshe May?
Adoun by olde January she lay,
That slepte, til the cough hath him awaked:
Anon he prayed hire stripen hire al naked,
He wold of hire, he said, have som plesance;
And said, hire clothes did him encombrance.
And she obeieth him, be hire lefe or loth.
But lest that precious folk be with me wroth,
How that he wrought, I dare nat to you tell,
Or wheder hire thought it paradis or hell;
But ther I let hem werken in hir wise
Til evesong rang, and that they must arise.
Were it by destinee, or aventure,
Were it by influence, or by nature,
Or constellation, that in swiche estat
The heven stood at that time fortunat,
As for to put a bill of Venus werkes
(For alle thing hath time, as sayn thise clerkes)
To any woman for to get hire love,
I cannot say, but grete God above,
That knoweth that non act is causeles,
He deme of all, for I wol hold my pees.
But soth is this, how that this freshe May
Hath taken swiche impression that day
Of pitee on this sike Damian,
That fro hire herte she ne driven can
The remembrance for to don him ese.
Certain (thought she) whom that this thing displese
I rekke not, for here I him assure,
To love him best of any creature,
Though he no more hadde than his sherte.
Lo, pitee renneth sone in gentil herte.
Here may ye seen, how excellent franchise
In women is whan they hem narwe avise.
Som tyraunt is, as ther ben many oh,
That hath an herte as hard as any stone,

Which wold han lette him sterven in the place
Wel rather than han granted him hire grace:
And hem rejoycen in hir cruel pride,
And rekken not to ben an homicide.
This gentil May, fulfilled of pitee,
Right of hire hond a lettre maketh she,
In which she granteth him hire veray grace;
There lacked nought, but only day and place,
Wher that she might unto his lust suffice:
For it shall be, right as he wol devise.
And whan she saw hire time upon a day
To visiten this Damian goth this May,
And sotilly this lettre doun she threst
Under his pilwe, rede it if him lest.
She taketh him by the hond, and hard him twist
So secretly, that no wight of it wist,
And bade him ben all hol, and forth she went
To January, whan he for hire sent.
Up riseth Damian the nexte morwe,
Al passed was his siknesse and his sorwe.
He kembeth him, he proineth him and piketh,
He doth all that his lady lust and liketh;
And eke to January he goth as lowe,
As ever did a dogge for the bowe.
He is so plesant unto every man,
(For craft is all, who so that don it can)
That every wight is fain to speke him good;
And fully in his ladies grace he stood.
Thus let I Damian about his nede,
And in my tale forth I wol procede.
Som clerkes holden that felicitee
Stant in delit, and therfore certain he
This noble January, with all his might
In honest wise as longeth to a knight,
Shope him to liven ful deliciously.
His housing, his array, as honestly
To his degree was maked as a kinges.
Amonges other of his honest thinges
He had a gardin walled all with ston,
So fayre a gardin wote I no wher non.
For out of doute I verayly suppose,
That he that wrote the Romant of the Rose,
Ne coude of it the beautee wel devise:
Ne Priapus ne mighte not suffise,
Though he be god of gardins, for to tell
The beautee of the gardin, and the well,
That stood under a laurer alway grene.
Ful often time he Pluto and his quene
Proserpina, and alle hir faerie,
Disporten hem and maken melodie
About that well, and dauneed, as men told.
This noble knight, this January the old
Swiche deintee hath in it to walke and pley,
That he wol suffre no wight bere the key,
Sauf he himself, for of the smal wiket
He bare alway of silver a cliket,
With which whan that him list he it unshette.
And whan that he wold pay his wives dette
In somer seson thider wold he go,
And May his wif, and no wight but they two;
And thinges which that were not don a-bedde,
He in the gardin parfourmed hem and spedde.
And in this wise many a mery day
Lived this January and freshe May,
But worldly joye may not alway endure
To January, ne to no creature.
O soden hap, o thou fortune unstable,
Like to the Scorpion so deceivable,
That flatrest with thy hed whan thou wolt sting;
Thy tayl is deth, thurgh thin enveniming.
O brotel joye, o swete poyson queinte,
O monstre, that so sotilly canst peinte
Thy giftes, under hewe of stedfastnesse,
That thou deceivest bothe more and lesse,
Why hast thou January thus deceived,
That haddest him for thy ful frend received?
And now thou hast beraft him both his eyen,
For sorwe of which desireth he to dyen.
Alas! this noble January free,
Amidde his lust and his prosperitee
Is waxen blind, and that al sodenly.
He wepeth and he waileth pitously;
And therwithall, the fire of jalousie
(Lest that his wif shuld fall in som folie)
So brent his herte, that he wolde fain,
That som man had both him and hire yslain;
For nother after his deth, ne in his lif,
Ne wold he that she were no love ne wif,
But ever live as a widewe in clothes blake,
Sole as the turtle that hath lost hire make.
But at the last, after a moneth or tway
His sorwe gan asswagen, soth to say.
For whan he wist it might non other be,
He patiently toke his adversitee:
Save out of doute he ne may nat forgon,
That he n'as jalous ever more in on:
Which jalousie it was so outrageous,
That neither in halle, ne in non other hous,
Ne in non other place never the mo
He n'olde suffre hire for to ride or go,
But if that he had honde on hire alway.
For which ful often wepeth freshe May,
That loveth Damian so brenningly,
That she moste either dien sodenly,
Or elles she moste han him as hire lest:
She waited whan hire herte wold to-brest.
Upon that other side Damian
Becomen is the sorwefullest man
That ever was, for neither night ne day
Ne might he speke a word to freshe May,
As to his purpos of no swiche matere,
But if that January must it here,
That had an hand upon hire evermo.
But natheles, by writing to and fro,
And privee signes, wist he what she ment,
And she knew eke the fin of his entent.
O January, what might it thee availe,
Though thou might seen, as fer as shippes saile?
For as good is blind to deceived be,
As be deceived, whan a man may see.
Lo Argus, which that had an hundred eyen,
For all that ever he coude pore or prien,
Yet was he blent, and, God wot, so ben mo,
That wenen wisly that it be not so:
Passe over is an ese, I say no more.
This freshe May, of which I spake of yore,
In warm wex hath enprented the cliket,
That January bare of the smal wiket,
By which into his gardin oft he went;
And Damian that knew all hire entent
The cliket contrefeted prively;
Ther n'is no more to say, but hastily
Som wonder by this cliket shal betide,
Which ye shul heren, if ye wol abide.
O noble Ovide, soth sayest thou, God wote,
What sleight is it if love be long and hote,
That he n'ill find it out in som manere?
By Pyramus and Thisbe may men lere;
Though they were kept ful long and streit over all,
They ben accorded, rowning thurgh a wall,

Ther no wight coude han founden swiche a sleighte.
But now to purpos; er that daies eighte
Were passed of the month of Juil, befill,
That January hath caught so gret a will,
Thurgh egging of his wif, him for to play
In his gardin, and no wight but they tway,
That in a morwe unto this May said he;
Rise up, my wif, my love, my lady free;
The turtles vois is herd, myn owen swete;
The winter is gon, with all his raines wete.
Come forth now with thin eyen columbine.
Wel fairer ben thy brests than ony wine.
The gardin is enclosed all aboute;
Come forth, my white spouse, for out of doute,
Thou hast me wounded in myn herte, o wif:
No spot in thee n'as never in all thy lif.
Come forth, and let us taken our disport,
I chese thee for my wif and my comfort.
Swiche olde lewed wordes used he.
On Damian a signe made she,
That he shuld go before with his cliket.
This Damian hath opened the wiket,
And in he stert, and that in swiche manere,
That no wight might him see neyther yhere,
And still he sit under a bush. Anon
This January, as blind as is a ston,
With Maius in his hand, and no wight mo,
Into this freshe gardin is ago,
And clapped to the wiket sodenly.
Now, wif, quod he, here n'is but thou, and I,
That art the creature that I best love:
For by that lord that sit in heven above,
I hadde lever dien on a knif,
Than thee offenden, dere trewe wif.
For Goddes sake, thinke how I thee chees,
Not for no covetise douteles,
But only for the love I had to thee.
And though that I be old and may not see,
Beth to me trewe, and I wol tell you why;
Certes three thinges shal ye win therby;
First love of Crist, and to yourself honour,
And all min heritage, toun and tour.
I yeve it you, maketh chartres as you lest:
This shal be don to-morwe er sonne rest,
So wisly God my soule bring to blisse;
I pray you on this covenant ye me kisse.
And though that I be jalous, wite me nought;
Ye ben so depe enprented in my thought,
That whan that I consider your beautee,
And therwithall the unlikely elde of me,
I may not certes, though I shulde die,
Forbere to ben out of your compagnie
For veray love; this is withouten doute:
Now kisse me, wif, and let us rome aboute.
This freshe May, whan she thise wordes herd,
Benignely to January answerd,
But first and forward she began to wepe:
I have, quod she, a soule for to kepe
As wel as ye, and also min honour,
And of my wifhood thilke tendre flour,
Which that I have assured in your hond,
Whan that the preest to you my body bond:
Wherfore I wol answere in this manere,
With leve of you, myn owen lord so dere.
I pray to God that never daw that day,
That I ne sterve, as foule as woman may,
If ever I do unto my kin that shame,
Or elles I empeire so my name,
That I be false; and if I do that lakke,
Do stripen me and put me in a sakke,
And in the nexte river do me drenche:
I am a gentil woman, and no wenche.
Why speke ye thus? but men ben ever untrewe,
And women han reprefe of you ay newe.
Ye con non other daliance, I leve,
But speke to us as of untrust and repreve.
And with that word she saw wher Damian
Sat in the bush, and coughen she began;
And with hire finger a signe made she,
That Damian shuld climbe up on a tre,
That charged was with fruit, and up he went:
For verailly he knew all hire entent,
And every signe that she coude make,
Wel bet than January hire owen make.
For in a lettre she had told him all
Of this matere, how that he werken shall.
And thus I let him sitting in the pery,
And January and May roming ful mery.
Bright was the day, and blew the firmament;
Phebus of gold his stremes doun hath sent
To gladen every flour with his warmnesse;
He was that time in *Geminis*, I gesse,
But litel fro his declination
Of Cancer, Joves exaltation.
And so befell in that bright morwe tide,
That in the gardin, on the ferther side,
Pluto, that is the king of Faerie,
And many a ladie in his compagnie
Folwing his wif, the quene Proserpina,
Which that he ravished out of Ethna,
While that she gadred floures in the mede,
(In Claudian ye may the story rede,
How that hire in his grisely carte he fette)
This king of Faerie adoun him sette
Upon a benche of turves freshe and grene,
And right anon thus said he to his quene.
My wif, quod he, ther may no wight say nay,
The experience so preveth it every day,
The treson which that woman doth to man.
Ten hundred thousand stories tell I can
Notable of your untrouth and brotelnesse.
O Salomon, richest of all richesse,
Fulfilled of sapience, and worldly glorie,
Ful worthy ben thy wordes to memorie
To every wight, that wit and reson can.
Thus praiseth he the bountee yet of man;
Among a thousand men yet fond I on,
But of all women fond I never non.
Thus saith this king, that knewe your wikkednesse;
And Jesus, *Filius* Sirach, as I gesse,
He speketh of you but selden reverence.
A wilde fire, a corrupt pestilence,
So fall upon your bodies yet to-night:
Ne see ye not this honourable knight?
Because, alas! that he is blind and old,
His owen man shal make him cokewold.
Lo, wher he sit, the lechour, in the tree.
Now wol I graunten of my majestee
Unto this olde blinde worthy knight,
That he shal have again his eyen sight,
Whan that his wif wol don him vilanie;
Than shal he knowen all hire harlotrie,
Both in reprefe of hire and other mo.
Ye, sire, quod Proserpine, and wol ye so?
Now by my modre Ceres soule I swere,
That I shall yeve hire suffisant answere,
And alle women after for hire sake;
That though they ben in any gilt ytake,
With face bold they shul hemselve excuse,
And bere hem doun that wolden hem accuse.

For lacke of answere, non of us shal dien.
Al had ye seen a thing with bothe youre eyen,
Yet shul we so visage it hardely,
And wepe and swere and chiden subtilly,
That ye shul ben as lewed as ben gees.
What rekketh me of your auctoritees?
I wote wel that this Jewe, this Salomon,
Fond of us women fooles many on:
But though that he ne fond no good woman,
Ther hath yfonden many an other man
Women ful good, and trewe, and vertuous;
Witnesse on hem that dwelte in Cristes hous,
With martyrdom they preved hir constance.
The Romain gestes maken remembrance
Of many a veray trewe wif also.
But, sire, ne be not wroth, al be it so,
Though that he said he fond no good woman,
I pray you take the sentence of the man:
He ment thus, That in soverain bountee
N'is non but God, no, nouther he ne she.
Ey, for the veray God that n'is but on,
What maken ye so moche of Salomon?
What though he made a temple, Goddes hous?
What though he riche were and glorious?
So made he eke a temple of false goddes,
How might he don a thing that more forbode is?
Parde as faire as ye his name emplastre,
He was a lechour, and an idolastre,
And in his elde he veray God forsoke.
And if that God ne hadde (as saith the boke)
Spared him for his fathers sake, he sholde
Han lost his regne rather than he wolde.
I sete nat of all the vilanie,
That he of women wrote, a boterflie.
I am a woman, nedes moste I speke,
Or swell unto that time min herte breke.
For sin he said that we ben jangleresses,
As ever mote I brouken hole my tresses,
I shal nat sparen for no curtesie
To speke him harm, that sayth us vilanie.
Dame, quod this Pluto, be no lenger wroth,
I yeve it up: but sin I swore min oth,
That I wold graunten him his sight again,
My word shal stand, that warne I you certain:
I am a king, it sit me not to lie.
And I, quod she, am quene of Faerie.
Hire answere she shal han I undertake,
Let us no more wordes of it make.
Forsoth, quod he, I wol you not contrary.
Now let us turne again to January,
That in the gardin with his faire May
Singeth wel merier than the popingay:
You love I best, and shal, and other non.
So long about the alleyes is he gon,
Til he was comen again to thilke pery,
Wher as this Damian sitteth ful mery
On high, among the freshe leves grene.
This freshe May, that is so bright and shene,
Gan for to sike, and said; alas my side!
Now, sire, quod she, for ought that may betide
I moste have of the peres that I see,
Or I moste die, so sore longeth me
To eten of the smale peres grene:
Help for hire love that is of heven quene.
I tell you wel a woman in my plit
May have to fruit so gret an appetit,
That she may dien, but she of it have.
Alas! quod he, that I n'adde here a knave,
That coude climbe, alas! alas! (quod he)
For I am blinde. Ye, sire, no force, quod she;
But wold ye vouchesauf for Goddes sake,
The pery in with your armes for to take,
(For wel I wot that ye mistrusten me)
Than wold I climben wel ynough, (quod she)
So I my fote might setten on your back.
Certes, said he, therin shal be no lack,
Might I you helpen with min herte blood.
He stoupeth doun, and on his back she stood,
And caught hire by a twist, and up she goth.
(Ladies, I pray you that ye be not wroth,
I can nat glose, I am a rude man:)
And sodenly anon this Damian
Gan pullen up the smock, and in he throng.
And whan that Pluto saw this grete wrong,
To January he yaf again his sight,
And made him see as wel as ever he might.
And whan he thus had caught his sight again,
Ne was ther never man of thing so fain:
But on his wif his thought was ever mo.
Up to the tree he cast his eyen two,
And saw how Damian his wife had dressed
In swiche manere, it may not ben expressed,
But if I wolde speke uncurteisly.
And up he yaf a roring and a cry,
As doth the mother whan the child shal die;
Out! helpe! alas! harow! he gan to cry;
O stronge lady store, what doest thou?
And she answered: sire, what aileth you?
Have patience and reson in your minde,
I have you holpen on both your eyen blinde.
Up peril of my soule, I shal nat lien,
As me was taught to helpen with your eyen,
Was nothing better for to make you see,
Than strogle with a man upon a tree:
God wot, I did it in ful good entent.
Strogle! quod he, ye, algate in it went.
God yeve you both on shames deth to dien!
He swived thee; I saw it with min eyen;
And elles be I honged by the halse.
Than is, quod she, my medicine al false.
For certainly, if that ye mighten see,
Ye wold not say thise wordes unto me.
Ye have som glimsing, and no parfit sight.
I see, quod he, as wel as ever I might,
(Thanked be God) with both min eyen two,
And by my feith me thought he did thee so.
Ye mase, ye masen, goode sire, quod she;
This thank have I for I have made you see:
Alas! quod she, that ever I was so kind.
Now, dame, quod he, let al passe out of mind;
Come doun, my lefe, and if I have missaid,
God helpe me so, as I am evil apaid.
But by my fadres soule, I wende have sein,
How that this Damain had by thee lein,
And that thy smock had lein upon his brest.
Ye, sire, quod she, ye may wene as you lest:
But, sire, a man that waketh of his slepe,
He may not sodenly wel taken kepe
Upon a thing, ne seen it parfitly,
Til that he be adawed verajly.
Right so a man, that long hath blind ybe,
He may not sodenly so wel ysee,
First whan his sight is newe comen agein,
As he that hath a day or two ysein.
Til that your sight ysatcled be a while,
Ther may ful many a sighte you begile.
Beware, I pray you, for by heven king
Ful many a man weneth to see a thing,
And it is all another than it semeth:
He which that misconceiveth oft misdemeth.

And with that word she lep doun fro the tree.
This January who is glad but he!
He kisseth hire, and clippeth hire ful oft,
And on hire wombe he stroketh hire ful soft;
And to his paleis home he hath hire lad.
Now, goode men, I pray you to be glad.
Thus endeth here my tale of Januarie,
God blesse us, and his moder Seinte Marie.

THE SQUIERES TALE.

THE SQUIERES PROLOGUE.

By Goddes mercy, sayde oure Hoste tho,
Now swiche a wif I preie God kepe me fro.
Lo, swiche sleightes and subtilitees
In women ben; for ay as besy as bees
Ben they us sely men for to deceive,
And from a sothe wol they ever weive.
By this Marchantes tale it preveth wel.
But natheles, as trewe as any stele,
I have a wif, though that she poure be;
But of hire tonge a labbing shrewe is she;
And yet she hath an hepe of vices mo.
Therof no force; let all swiche thinges go.
But wete ye what? in conseil be it seyde,
Me reweth sore I am unto hire teyde;
For and I shulde rekene every vice,
Which that she hath, ywis I were to nice;
And cause why, it shulde reported be
And told to hire of som of this compagnie,
(Of whom it nedeth not for to declare,
Sin women connen utter swiche chaffare)
And eke my wit sufficeth not therto
To tellen all; wherfore my tale is do.
Squier, come ner, if it youre wille be,
And say somwhat of love, for certes ye
Connen theron as moche as any man.
Nay, sire, quod he, but swiche thing as I can
With hertly wille, for I wol not rebelle
Agein youre lust, a tale wol I telle.
Have me excused if I speke amis;
My wille is good; and lo, my tale is this.

THE SQUIERES TALE.

At Sarra, in the lond of Tartarie,
Ther dwelt a king that werreied Russie,
Thurgh which ther died many a doughty man:
This noble king was cleped Cambuscan,
Which in his time was of so gret renoun,
That ther n'as no wher in no regioun,
So excellent a lord in alle thing:
Him lacked nought that longeth to a king,
As of the secte of which that he was borne.
He kept his lay to which he was ysworne,
And therto he was hardy, wise, and riche,
And pitous and just, and alway yliche;
Trewe of his word, benigne and honourable;
Of his corage as any centre stable;
Yong, fresh, and strong, in armes desirous,
As any bacheler of all his hous.
A faire person he was, and fortunate,
And kept alway so wel real estat,
That ther n'as no wher swiche another man.
This noble king, this Tartre Cambuscan,
Hadde two sones by Elfeta his wif,
Of which the eldest sone highte Algarsif,
That other was ycleped Camballo.
A doughter had this worthy king also,
That yongest was, and highte Canace:
But for to tellen you all hire beautee,
It lith not in my tonge, ne in my conning,
I dare not undertake so high a thing:
Min English eke is unsufficient,
It muste ben a Rethor excellent,
That coude his colours longing for that art,
If he shuld hire descriven ony part:
I am not swiche, I mote speke as I can.
And so befell, that whan this Cambuscan
Hath twenty winter borne his diademe,
As he was wont fro yere to yere I deme,
He let the feste of his nativitee
Don crien, thurghout Sarra his citee,
The last Idus of March, after the yere.
Phebus the sonne ful jolif was and clere,
For he was nigh his exaltation
In Martes face, and in his mansion
In Aries, the colerike hote signe:
Ful lusty was the wether and benigne,
For which the foules again the sonne shene,
What for the seson and the yonge grene,
Ful loude songen hir affections:
Hem semed han getten hem protections
Again the swerd of winter kene and cold.
This Cambuscan, of which I have you told,
In real vestiments, sit on his deis
With diademe, ful high in his paleis;
And holt his feste so solempne and so riche,
That in this world ne was ther non it liche.
Of which if I shal tellen all the array,
Than wold it occupie a somers day;
And eke it nedeth not for to devise
At every cours the order of hir service.
I wol not tellen of hir strange sewes,
Ne of her swannes, ne hir heronsewes.
Eke in that lond, as tellen knightes old,
Ther is som mete that is ful deintee hold,
That in this lond men recche of it ful smal:
Ther n'is no man that may reporten al.
I wol not tarien you, for it is prime,
And for it is no fruit, but losse of time,
Unto my purpose I wol have recours.
And so befell that after the thridde cours
While that this king sit thus in his nobley,
Herking his ministralles hir thinges pley
Beforne him at his bord deliciously,
In at the halle dore al sodenly
Ther came a knight upon a stede of bras,
And in his hond a brod mirrour of glas;
Upon his thombe he had of gold a ring,
And by his side a naked swerd hanging:

And up he rideth to the highe bord.
In all the halle ne was ther spoke a word,
For mervaille of this knight ; him to behold
Ful besily they waiten yong and old.
This strange knight that come thus sodenly
Al armed save his hed ful richely,
Saluetb king and quene, and lordes alle
By order, as they saten in the halle,
With so high reverence and observance,
As wel in speche as in his contenance,
That Gawain with his olde curtesie,
Though he were come agen out of faerie,
Ne coude him not amenden with a word.
And after this, beforn the highe bord
He with a manly vois sayd his message,
After the forme used in his langage,
Withouten vice of sillable or of letter.
And for his tale shulde seme the better,
Accordant to his wordes was his chere,
As techeth art of speche hem that it lere.
Al be it that I cannot soune his stile,
Ne cannot climben over so high a stile,
Yet say I this, as to comun entent,
Thus much amounteth all that ever he ment,
If it so be that I have it in mind.
He sayd ; The king of Arabie and of Inde,
My liege lord, on this solempne day
Saluetb you as he best can and may,
And sendeth you in honour of your feste
By me, that am al redy at your heste,
This stede of bras, that esily and wel
Can in the space of a day naturel,
(This is to sayn, in four and twenty houres)
Wher so you list, in drought or elles shoures,
Beren your body into every place,
To which your herte willeth for to pace,
Withouten wemme of you, thurgh foule or faire.
Of if you list to fleen as high in the aire,
As doth an egle, whan him list to sore,
This same stede shal bere you evermore
Withouten harme, till ye be ther you lest,
(Though that ye slepen on his back or rest)
And turne again, with writhing of a pin.
He that it wrought, he coude many a gin ;
He waited many a constellation,
Or he had don this operation,
And knew ful many a sele and many a bond.
This mirrour eke, that I have in min hond,
Hath swiche a might, that men may in it see,
Whan ther shal falle ony adversitee
Unto your regne, or to yourself also,
And openly, who is your frend or fo.
And over all this, if any lady bright
Hath set hire herte on any maner wight,
If he be false, she shal his treson see,
His newe love, and all his subtiltee
So openly, that ther shal nothing hide.
Wherfore again this lusty somer tide
This mirrour and this ring, that ye may se,
He hath sent to my lady Canace,
Your excellente doughter that is here.
The vertue of this ring, if ye wol here,
Is this, that if hire list it for to were
Upon hire thombe, or in hire purse it bere,
Ther is no foule that fleeth under heven,
That she ne shal wel understond his steven,
And know his mening openly and plaine,
And answere him in his langage again :
And every gras that groweth upon rote
She shal eke know, and whom it wol do bote,
All be his woundes never so depe and wide.
This naked sword, that hangeth by my side,
Swiche vertue hath, that what man that it smite,
Thurghout his armure it wol kerve and bite,
Were it as thicke as is a braunched oke :
And what man that is wounded with the stroke
Shal never be hole, til that you list of grace
To stroken him with the platte in thilke place
Ther he is hurt ; this is as much to sain,
Ye moten with the platte sword again
Stroken him in the wound, and it wol close.
This is the veray soth withouten glose,
It failleth not, while it is in your hold.
And whan this knight hath thus his tale told,
He rideth out of halle, and doun he light :
His stede, which that shone as sonne bright,
Stant in the court as stille as any ston.
This knight is to his chambre ladde anon,
And is unarmed, and to the mete ysette.
Thise presents ben ful richelich yfette,
This is to sain, the sword and the mirrour,
And borne anon into the highe tour,
With certain officers ordained therfore ;
And unto Canace the ring is bore
Solempnely, ther she sat at the table ;
But sikerly, withouten any fable,
The hors of bras, that may not be remued ;
It stant, as it were to the ground yglued ;
Ther may no man out of the place it drive
For non engine, of windas, or polive :
And cause why, for they con not the craft,
And therfore in the place they han it laft,
Til that the knight hath taught hem the manere
To voiden him, as ye shal after here.
Gret was the prees, that swarmed to and fro
To gauren on this hors that stondeth so :
For it so high was, and so brod and long,
So wel proportioned for to be strong,
Right as it were a stede of Lumbardie ;
Therwith so horsly, and so quik of eye,
As it a gentil Poileis courser were :
For certes, fro his tayl unto his ere
Nature ne art ne coud him not amend
In no degree, as all the peple wend.
But evermore hir moste wonder was,
How that it coude gon, and was of bras ;
It was of faerie, as the peple semed.
Diverse folk diversely han demed ;
As many heds, as many wittes ben.
They murmured, as doth a swarme of been,
And maden skilles after hir fantasies,
Rehersing of the olde poetries,
And sayd it was ylike the Pegasee,
The hors that hadde winges for to flee,
Or elles it was the Grekes hors Sinon,
That broughte Troye to destruction,
As men moun in thise olde gestes rede.
Min herte (quod on) is evermore in drede,
I trow som men of armes ben therin,
That shapen hem this citee for to win :
It were right good that al swiche thing were know.
Another rowned to his felaw low,
And sayd, He lieth, for it is rather like
An apparence ymade by som magike,
As jogelours plaien at thise festes grete.
Of sondry doutes thus they jangle and trete,
As lewed peple demen comunly
Of thinges, that ben made more subtilly,
Than they can in hir lewednesse comprehende,
They demen gladly to the badder ende.

And som of hem wondred on the mirrour,
That born was up in to the maister tour,
How men mighte in it swiche thinges see.
Another answerd, and sayd, it might wel be
Naturelly by compositions
Of angles, and of slie reflections;
And saide that in Rome was swiche on.
They speke of Alhazen and Vitellon,
And Aristotle, that writen in hir lives
Of queinte mirrours, and of prospectives,
As knowen they, that han hir bookes herd.
And other folk han wondred on the swerd,
That wolde percen thurghout every thing:
And fell in speche of Telephus the king,
And of Achilles for his queinte spere,
For he coude with it bothe hele and dere,
Right in swiche wise as men may with the swerd,
Of which right now ye have yourselven herd.
They speken of sondry harding of metall,
And speken of medicines therwithall,
And how, and whan it shuld yharded be,
Which is unknow algates unto me.
Tho speken they of Canacees ring,
And saiden all, that swiche a wonder thing
Of craft of ringes herd they never non,
Save that he Moises and king Salomon
Hadden a name of conning in swiche art.
Thus sain the peple, and drawen hem apart.
But natheles som saiden that it was
Wonder to maken of ferne ashen glas,
And yet is glas nought like ashen of ferne,
But for they han yknowen it so ferne,
Therfore ceseth hir jangling and hir wonder.
As sore wondren som on cause of thonder,
On ebbe and floud, on gossomer, and on mist,
And on all thing, til that the cause is wist.
Thus janglen they, and demen and devise,
Til that the king gan fro his bord arise.
Phebus hath left the angle meridional,
And yet ascending was the beste real,
The gentil Leon, with his Aldrian,
Whan that this Tartre king, this Cambuscan,
Rose from his bord, ther as he sat ful hie:
Beforne him goth the loude minstralcie,
Til he come to his chambre of parements,
Ther as they sounden divers instruments,
That it is like an heven for to here.
Now dauncen lusty Venus children dere:
For in the fish hir lady set ful hie,
And loketh on hem with a frendly eye.
This noble king is set upon his trone;
This straunge knight is fet to him ful sone,
And on the daunce he goth with Canace.
Here is the revell and the jolitee,
That is not able a dull man to devise:
He must han knowen love and his servise,
And ben a festlich man, as fresh as May,
That shulde you devisen swiche array.
Who coude tellen you the forme of daunces
So uncouth, and so freshe contenaunces,
Swiche subtil lokings and dissimulings,
For dred of jalous mennes apperceivings?
No man but Launcelot, and he is ded.
Therfore I passe over all this lustyhed,
I say no more, but in this jolinesse
I lete hem, til men to the souper hem dresse.
The steward bit the spices for to hie
And eke the win, in all this melodie;
The ushers and the squierie ben gon,
The spices and the win is come anon:
They ete and drinke, and whan this had an end,
Unto the temple, as reson was, they wend:
The service don, they soupen all by day.
What nedeth you rehersen hir array?
Eche man wot wel, that at a kinges fest
Is plentee, to the most and to the lest,
And deintees mo than ben in my knowing.
At after souper goth this noble king
To seen this hors of bras, with all a route
Of lordes and of ladies him aboute.
Swiche wondring was ther on this hors of bras,
That sin the gret assege of Troye was,
Ther as men wondred on an hors also,
Ne was ther swiche a wondring, as was tho.
But finally the king asketh the knight
The vertue of this courser, and the might,
And praied him to tell his governaunce.
This hors anon gan for to trip and daunce,
Whan that the knight laid hond up on his rein,
And saide, sire, ther n'is no more to sain,
But whan you list to riden any where,
Ye moten trill a pin, stant in his ere,
Which I shal tellen you betwixt us two,
Ye moten nempne him to what place also,
Or to what contree that you list to ride.
And whan ye come ther as you list abide,
Bid him descend, and trill another pin,
(For therin lieth the effect of all the gin)
And he wol doun descend and don your will,
And in that place he wol abiden still:
Though al the world had the contrary swore,
He shal not thennes be drawe ne be bore.
Or if you list to bid him thennes gon,
Trille this pin, and he wol vanish anon
Out of the sight of every maner wight,
And come agen, be it by day or night,
Whan that you list to clepen him again
In swiche a guise, as I shal to you sain
Betwixen you and me, and that ful sone.
Ride whan you list, ther n'is no more to done.
Enfourmed whan the king was of the knight,
And hath conceived in his wit aright
The maner and the forme of all this thing,
Ful glad and blith, this noble doughty king
Repaireth to his revel, as beforne.
The bridel is in to the tour yborne,
And kept among his jewels lefe and dere:
The hors vanisht, I n'ot in what manere,
Out of hir sight, ye get no more of me:
But thus I lete in lust and jolitee
This Cambuscan his lordes festeying,
Til that wel nigh the day began to spring.

PARS SECUNDA.

The norice of digestion, the slepe,
Gan on hem winke, and bad hem taken kepe,
That mochel drinke, and labour wol have rest:
And with a galping mouth hem all he kest,
And said, that it was time to lie adoun,
For blood was in his dominatioun:
Cherisheth blood, natures frend, quod he.
They thanken him galping, by two by three;
And every wight gan drawe him to his rest,
As slepe hem bade, they toke it for the best.
Hir dremes shul not now be told for me;
Ful were hir hedes of fumositee,
That causeth dreme, of which ther is no charge.
They slepen til that it was prime large,

The moste part, but it were Canace;
She was ful mesurable, as women be.
For of hire father had she take hire leve
To gon to rest, sone after it was eve;
Hire liste not appalled for to be,
Nor on the morwe unfestliche for to see;
And slept hire firste slepe, and than awoke.
For swiche a joye she in hire herte toke
Both of hire queinte ring, and of hire mirrour,
That twenty time she chaunged hire colour;
And in hire slepe right for the impression
Of hire mirrour she had a vision.
Wherfore, or that the sonne gan up glide,
She clepeth upon hire maistresse hire beside,
And saide, that hire luste for to arise.
Thise olde women, that ben gladly wise,
As is hire maistresse, answerd hire anon,
And said; Madame, whider wol ye gon
Thus erly? for the folk ben all in rest.
I wol, quod she, arisen (for me lest
No longer for to slepe) and walken aboute.
Hire maistresse clepeth women a gret route,
And up they risen, wel a ten or twelve;
Up riseth freshe Canace hireselve,
As rody and bright, as the yonge sonne,
That in the ram is foure degrees yronne;
No higher was he, whan she redy was;
And forth she walketh esily a pas,
Arrayed after the lusty seson sote
Lightely for to playe, and walken on fote,
Nought but with five or sixe of hire meinie;
And in a trenche forth in the park goth she.
The vapour, which that fro the erthe glode,
Maketh the sonne to seme rody and brode:
But natheles, it was so faire a sight,
That it made all hir hertes for to light,
What for the seson, and the morwening,
And for the foules that she herde sing.
For right anon she wiste what they ment
Right by hir song, and knew al hir entent.
The knotte, why that every tale is tolde,
If it be taried til the lust be colde
Of hem, that han it herkened after yore,
The savour passeth ever lenger the more,
For fulsumnesse of the prolixitee:
And by that same reson thinketh me
I shuld unto the knotte condescende,
And maken of hire walking sone an ende.
Amidde a tree for-dry, as white as chalk,
As Canace was playing in hire walk,
Ther sat a faucon over hire hed ful hie,
That with a pitous vois so gan to crie,
That all the wood resouned of hire cry,
And beten had hireself so pitously
With bothe hire winges, til the rede blood
Ran endelong the tree, ther as she stood.
And ever in on alway she cried and shright,
And with hire bek hireselven she so twight,
That ther n'is tigre, ne no cruel best,
That dwelleth other in wood, or in forest,
That n'olde han wept, if that he wepen coude,
For sorwe of hire, she shright alway so loude.
For ther was never yet no man on live,
If that he coude a faucon wel descrive,
That herde of swiche another of fayreness
As wel of plumage, as of gentilesse,
Of shape, of all that might yrekened be.
A faucon peregrine semed she
Of fremde lond, and ever as she stood,
She swouned now and now for lack of blood,
Til wel neigh is she fallen fro the tree.
This faire kinges doughter Canace,
That on hire finger bare the queinte ring,
Thurgh which she understood wel every thing
That any foule may in his leden sain,
And coude answere him in his leden again,
Hath understonden what this faucon seyd,
And wel neigh for the routhe almost she deyd:
And to the tree she goth ful hastily,
And on this faucon loketh pitously,
And held hire lap abrode, for wel she wist
The faucon muste fallen from the twist
Whan that she swouned next, for faute of blood.
A longe while to waiten hire she stood,
Til at the last she spake in this manere
Unto the hauk, as ye shul after here.
What is the cause, if it be for to tell,
That ye ben in this furial peine of hell?
Quod Canace unto this hauk above;
Is this for sorwe of deth, or losse of love?
For as I trow, thise be the causes two,
That causen most a gentil herte wo.
Of other harme it nedeth not to speke,
For ye yourself upon yourself awreke,
Which preveth wel, that other ire or drede
Mote ben encheson of your cruel dede,
Sin that I se non other wight you chace.
For the love of God, as doth yourselven grace:
Or what may be your helpe? for west ne est
Ne saw I never er now no brid ne best,
That ferde with himself so pitously.
Ye sle me with your sorwe verailly,
I have of you so gret compassioun.
For Goddes love come fro the tree adoun;
And as I am a kinges doughter trewe,
If that I verailly the causes knewe
Of your disese, if it lay in my might,
I wold amend it, or that it were night,
As wisly help me the gret God of kind.
And herbes shal I right ynough yfind,
To helen with your hurtes hastily.
Tho shright this faucon yet more pitously
Than ever she did, and fell to ground anon,
And lith aswoune, as ded as lith a ston,
Til Canace hath in hire lappe hire take,
Unto that time she gan of swoune awake:
And after that she out of swoune abraide,
Right in hire haukes leden thus she sayde.
That pitee renneth sone in gentil herte
(Feling his similitude in peines smerte)
Is proved alle day, as men may see,
As wel by werke as by auctoritee,
For gentil herte kitheth gentillesse.
I see wel, that ye have on my distresse
Compassion, my faire Canace,
Of veray womanly benignitee,
That nature in your principles hath set.
But for non hope for to fare the bet,
But for to obey unto your herte free,
And for to maken other yware by me,
As by the whelpe chastised is the leon,
Right for that cause and that conclusion,
While that I have a leiser and a space,
Min harme I wol confessen er I pace.
And ever while that on hire sorwe told,
That other wept, as she to water wold,
Til that the faucon bad hire to be still,
And with a sike right thus she said hire till.
Ther I was bred, (alas that ilke day!)
And fostred in a roche of marble gray

So tendrely, that nothing ailed me.
I ne wist not what was adversitee,
Til I coud flee ful high under the skie.
Tho dwelled a tercelet me faste by,
That semed welle of alle gentillesse,
Al were he ful of treson and falsenesse.
It was so wrapped under humble chere,
And under hew of trouth in swiche manere,
Under plesance, and under besy peine,
That no wight coud have wend he coude feine,
So depe in greyn he died his coloures.
Right as a serpent hideth him under floures,
Til he may see his time for to bite;
Right so this god of loves hypocrite
Doth so his ceremonies and obeisance,
And kepeth in semblaunt alle his observance,
That souneth unto gentillesse of love.
As on a tombe is all the faire above,
And under is the corps, swiche as ye wote;
Swiche was this hypocrite both cold and hote,
And in this wise he served his entent,
That, save the fend, non wiste what he ment:
Til he so long had weped and complained,
And many a yere his service to me fained,
Till that min herte, to pitous and to nice,
Al innocent of his crowned malice,
For-fered of his deth, as thoughte me,
Upon his othes and his seuretee,
Graunted him love, on this conditioun,
That evermo min honour and renoun
Were saved, bothe privee and apert;
This is to say, that, after his desert,
I yave him all min herte and all my thought,
(God wote, and he, that other wayes nought)
And toke his herte in chaunge of min for ay.
But soth is said, gon sithen is many a day,
A trewe wight and a theef thinken not on.
And whan he saw the thing so fer ygon,
That I had granted him fully my love,
In swiche a guise as I have said above,
And yeven him my trewe herte as free
As he swore that he yaf his herte to me,
Anon this tigre, ful of doublenesse,
Fell on his knees with so gret humblesse,
With so high reverence, as by his chere,
So like a gentil lover of manere,
So ravished, as it semed, for the joye,
That never Jason, ne Paris of Troye,
Jason! certes, ne never other man,
Sin Lamech was, that alderfirst began
To loven two, as writen folk beforne,
Ne never sithen the first man was borne,
Ne coude man by twenty thousand part
Contrefete the sophimes of his art;
Ne were worthy to unbocle his galoche,
Ther doublenesse of faining shuld approche,
Ne coude so thanke a wight, as he did me.
His maner was an heven for to see
To any woman, were she never so wise;
So painted he and kempt, at point devise,
As wel his wordes, as his contenance.
And I so loved him for his obeisance,
And for the trouthe I demed in his herte,
That if so were that any thing him smerte,
Al were it never so lite, and I it wist,
Me thought I felt deth at myn herte twist.
And shortly, so ferforth this thing is went,
That my will was his willes instrument;
This is to say, my will obeied his will
In alle thing, as fer as reson fill,
Keping the boundes of my worship ever:
Ne never had I thing so lefe, ne lever,
As him, God wot, ne never shal no mo.
This lasteth lenger than a yere or two,
That I supposed of him nought but good.
But finally, thus at the last it stood,
That fortune wolde that he muste twin
Out of that place, which that I was in.
Wher me was wo, it is no question;
I cannot make of it description.
For o thing dare I tellen boldely,
I know what is the peine of deth therby,
Swiche harme I felt, for he ne might byleve.
So on a day of me he toke his leve,
So sorweful eke, that I wend veraily,
That he had felt as mochel harme as I,
Whan that I herd him speke, and saw his hewe.
But natheles, I thought he was so trewe,
And eke that he repairen shuld again
Within a litel while, soth to sain,
And reson wold eke that he muste go
For his honour, as often happeth so,
That I made vertue of necessitee,
And toke it wel, sin that it muste be.
As I best might, I hid fro him my sorwe,
And toke him by the hond, Seint John to borwe,
And said him thus; lo, I am youres all,
Beth swiche as I have ben to you and shall.
What he answerd, it nedeth not reherse;
Who can say bet than he, who can do werse?
Whan he hath al wel said, than hath he done.
Therfore behoveth him a ful long spone,
That shal ete with a fend; thus herd I say.
So at the last he muste forth his way,
And forth he fleeth, til he come ther him lest.
Whan it came him to purpos for to rest,
I trow that he had thilke text in mind,
That alle thing repairing to his kind
Gladeth himself; thus sain men as I gesse:
Men loven of propre kind newefangelnesse,
As briddes don, that men in cages fede.
For though thou night and day take of hem hede,
And strew hir cage faire and soft as silke,
And give hem sugre, hony, bred, and milke,
Yet right anon as that his dore is up,
He with his feet wol spurnen doun his cup,
And to the wood he wol, and wormes ete;
So newefangel ben they of hir mete,
And loven noveltees of propre kind;
No gentillesse of blood ne may hem bind.
So ferd this tercelet, alas the day!
Though he were gentil borne, and fresh, and gay,
And goodly for to seen, and humble, and free,
He saw upon a time a kite flee,
And sodenly he loved this kite so,
That all his love is clene fro me ago:
And hath his trouthe falsed in this wise.
Thus hath the kite my love in hire service,
And I am lorn withouten remedy.
And with that word this faucon gan to cry,
And swouneth eft in Canacees barme.
Gret was the sorwe for that haukes harme,
That Canace and all hire women made;
They n'isten how they might the faucon glade.
But Canace hom bereth hire in hire lap,
And softely in plastres gan hire wrap,
Ther as she with hire bek had hurt hirselve.
Now cannot Canace but herbes delve
Out of the ground, and maken salves newe
Of herbes precious and fine of hewe,

To helen with this hauk ; fro day to night
She doth hire besinesse, and all hire might.
And by hire beddes hed she made a mew,
And covered it with velouettes blew,
In signe of trouth, that is in woman sene;
And all without the mew is peinted grene,
In which were peinted all thise false foules,
As ben thise tidifes, tercelettes, and owles ;
And pies, on hem for to cry and chide,
Right for despit were peinted hem beside.
Thus lete I Canace hire hauk keping.
I wol no more as now speke of hire ring,
Til it come eft to purpos for to sain,
How that this faucon gat hire love again
Repentant, as the story telleth us,
By mediation of Camballus
The kinges sone, of which that I you told.
But hennesforth I wol my processe hold
To speke of aventures, and of batailles,
That yet was never herd so gret mervailles.
First wol I tellen you of Cambuscan,
That in his time many a citee wan :
And after wol I speke of Algarsif,
How that he wan Theodora to his wif,
For whom ful oft in gret peril he was,
Ne had he ben holpen by the hors of bras.
And after wol I speke of Camballo,
That fought in listes with the brethren two
For Canace, er that he might hire winne,
And ther I left I wol again beginne.

• • • •

THE FRANKELEINES TALE.

THE FRANKELEINES PROLOGUE.

In faith, Squier, thou hast thee wel yquit
And gentilly, I preise wel thy wit,
Quod the Frankelein ; considering thin youthe,
So felingly thou spekest, sire, I aloue the
As to my dome, ther is non that is here,
Of eloquence that shal be thy pere,
If that thou live ; God yeve thee goode chance,
And in vertue send thee continuance,
For of thy speking I have gret deintee.
I have a sone, and by the Trinitee
It were me lever than twenty pound worth lond,
Though it right now were fallen in my hond,
He were a man of swiche discretion,
As that ye ben : fie on possession,
But if a man be vertuous withal.
I have my sone snibbed, and yet shal,
For he to vertue listeth not to entend,
But for to play at dis, and to dispend,
And lese all that he hath, is his usage;
And he had lever talken with a page,
Than to commune with any gentil wight,
Ther he might leren gentillesse aright.
Straw for your gentillesse, quod our hoste.
What ! Frankelein, parde, sire, wel thou wost,
That eche of you mote tellen at the lest
A tale or two, or breken his behest.
That know I wel, sire, quod the Frankelein,
I pray you haveth me not in disdein,
Though I to this man speke a word or two.
Tell on thy tale, withouten wordes mo.
Gladly, sire hoste, quod he, I wol obey
Unto your will ; now herkeneth what I sey ;
I wol you not contrarien in no wise,
As fer as that my wittes may suffice.
I pray to God that it may plesen you,
Than wot I wel that it is good ynow.

Thise olde gentil Bretons in hir dayes
Of diverse aventures maden layes,
Rimeyed in hir firste Breton tonge;
Which layes with hir instruments they songe,
Or elles redden hem for hir plesance,
And on of hem have I in remembrance,
Which I shal sayn with good wille as I can.
But, sires, because I am a borel man,
At my beginning first I you beseche
Have me excused of my rude speche.
I lerned never rhetorike certain ;
Thing that I speke, it mote be bare and plain.
I slept never on the mount of Pernaso,
Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Cicero.
Colours ne know I non, withouten drede,
But swiche colours as growen in the mede,
Or elles swiche as men die with or peinte ;
Colours of rhetorike ben to me queinte ;
My spirit feleth not of swiche matere.
But if you lust my tale shul ye here.

THE FRANKELEINES TALE.

In Armorike, that called is Bretaigne,
Ther was a knight, that loved and did his peine
To serve a ladie in his beste wise ;
And many a labour, many a gret emprise
He for his lady wrought, or she were wonne:
For she was on the fairest under sonne,
And eke therto comen of so high kinrede,
That wel unnethes durst this knight for drede
Tell hire his wo, his peine, and his distresse.
But at the last, she for his worthinesse,
And namely for his meke obeysance,
Hath swiche a pitee caught of his penance,
That prively she fell of his accord
To take him for hire husbond and hire lord ;
(Of swiche lordship as men han over hir wives)
And, for to lede the more in blisse hir lives,
Of his free will he swore hire as a knight,
That never in all his lif he day ne night
Ne shulde take upon him no maistrie
Agains hire will, ne kithe hire jalousie,
But hire obey, and folwe hire will in al,
As any lover to his lady shal :

Save that the name of soverainetee
That wold he han for shame of his degree.
She thonked him, and with ful gret humblesse
She saide ; sire, sin of your gentillesse
Ye profren me to have so large a reine,
Ne wolde God never betwix us tweine,
As in my gilt, were either werre or strif :
Sire, I wol be your humble trewe wif,
Have here my trouth, till that myn herte breste.
Thus ben they both in quiete and in reste.
For o thing, sires, saufly dare I seie,
That frendes everich other must obeie,
If they wol longe holden compagnie.
Love wol not be constreined by maistrie.
Whan maistrie cometh, the God of love anon
Beteth his winges, and farewel, he is gon.
Love is a thing, as any spirit, free.
Women of kind desiren libertee,
And not to be constreined as a thral ;
And so don men, if sothly I say shal.
Loke who that is most patient in love,
He is at his avantage all above.
Patience is an high vertue certain,
For it venquisheth, as thise clerkes sain,
Thinges that rigour never shulde atteine.
For every word men may not chide or pleine.
Lerneth to suffren, or, so mote I gon,
Ye shul it lerne whether ye wol or non.
For in this world certain no wight ther is,
That he ne doth or sayth somtime amis.
Ire, sikenesse, or constellation,
Win, wo, or changing of complexion,
Causeth ful oft to don amis or speken :
On every wrong a man may not be wreken.
After the time must be temperance
To every wight that can of governance.
And therfore hath this worthy wise knight
(To liven in ese) suffrance hire behight ;
And she to him ful wisly gan to swere,
That never shuld ther be defaute in here.
Here may men seen an humble wise accord :
Thus hath she take hire servant and hire lord,
Servant in love, and lord in mariage.
Than was he both in lordship and servage ?
Servage ? nay, but in lordship al above,
Sin he hath both his lady and his love :
His lady certes, and his wif also,
The which that law of love accordeth to.
And whan he was in this prosperitee,
Home with his wif he goth to his contree,
Not fer fro Penmark, ther his dwelling was,
Wher as he liveth in blisse and in solas.
Who coude tell, but he had wedded be,
The joye, the ese, and the prosperitee,
That is betwix an husbond and his wif ?
A yere and more lasteth this blisful lif,
Til that this knight, of which I spake of thus,
That of Cairrud was cleped Arviragus,
Shope him to gon and dwelle a yere or twaine
In Englelond, that cleped was eke Bretaigne,
To seke in armes worship and honour :
(For all his lust he set in swiche labour)
And dwelte ther two yere ; the book saith thus.
Now wol I stint of this Arviragus,
And speke I wol of Dorigene his wif,
That loveth hire husbond as hire hertes lif.
For his absence wepeth she and siketh,
As don thise noble wives whan hem liketh ;
She morneth, waketh, waileth, fasteth, pleineth ;
Desir of his presence hire so distraineth,
That all this wide world she set at nought.
Hire frendes, which that knew hire hevy thought,
Comforten hire in all that ever they may ;
They prechen hire, they telle hire night and day,
That causeles she sleth hireself, alas !
And every comfort possible in this cas
They don to hire, with all hir besinesse,
Al for to make hire leve hire hevinesse.
By processe, as ye knowen everich on,
Men mowe so longe graven in a ston,
Til som figure therin emprented be :
So long han they comforted hire, til she
Received hath, by hope and by reson,
The emprenting of hir consolation,
Thurgh which hire grete sorwe gan assuage ;
She may not alway duren in swiche rage.
And eke Arviragus, in all this care,
Hath sent his lettres home of his welfare,
And that he wol come hastily again,
Or elles had this sorwe hire herte slain.
Hire frendes saw hire sorwe gan to slake,
And preiden hire on knees for Goddes sake
To come and romen in hir compagnie,
Away to driven hire derke fantasie :
And finally she granted that request,
For wel she saw that it was for the best.
Now stood hire castel faste by the see,
And often with hire frendes walked she,
Hire to disporten on the bank an hie,
Wher as she many a ship and barge sie,
Sailing hir cours, wher as hem list to go.
But than was that a parcel of hire wo,
For to hireself ful oft, alas ! said she,
Is ther no ship, of so many as I see,
Wol bringen home my lord ? than were my herte
Al warished of his bitter peines smerte.
Another time wold she sit and thinke,
And cast her eyen dounward fro the brinke ;
But whan she saw the grisly rockes blake,
For veray fere so wold hire herte quake,
That on hire feet she might hire not sustene.
Than wold she sit adoun upon the grene,
And pitously into the see behold,
And say right thus, with careful sikes cold.
Eterne God, that thurgh thy purveance
Ledest this world by certain governance,
In idel, as men sain, ye nothing make.
But, lord, thise grisly fendly rockes blake,
That semen rather a foule confusion
Of werk, than any faire creation
Of swiche a parfit wise God and stable,
Why han ye wrought this werk unresonable ?
For by this werk, north, south, ne west, ne est,
Ther n'is yfostred man, ne brid, ne best :
It doth no good, to my wit, but anoyeth.
See ye not, lord, how mankind it destroyeth ?
An hundred thousand bodies of mankind
Han rockes slain, al be they not in mind ;
Which mankind is so faire part of thy werk,
Thou madest it like to thyn owen merk.
Than, semeth it, ye had a gret chertee
Toward mankind ; but how than may it be,
That ye swiche menes make it to destroyen ?
Which menes don no good, but ever anoyen.
I wote wel, clerkes wol sain as hem lest
By arguments, that all is for the best,
Though I ne can the causes nought yknow ;
But thilke God that made the wind to blow,
As kepe my lord, this is my conclusion :
To clerkes lete I all disputison ·

But wolde God, that all thise rockes blake
Were sonken into helle for his sake.
Thise rockes slee min herte for the fere.
Thus wold she say with many a pitous tere.
Hire frendes saw that it was no disport
To romen by the see, but discomfort,
And shape hem for to plaien somwher elles.
They leden hire by rivers and by welles,
And eke in other places delitables;
They dancen and they play at ches and tables.
So on a day, right in the morwe tide,
Unto a gardin that was ther beside,
In which that they had made hir ordinance
Of vitaille, and of other purveance,
They gon and plaie hem all the longe day:
And this was on the sixte morwe of May,
Which May had peinted with his softe shoures
This gardin ful of leves and of floures:
And craft of mannes hond so curiously
Arrayed had this gardin trewely,
That never was ther gardin of swiche pris,
But if it were the veray paradis.
The odour of floures, and the freshe sight,
Wold han ymaked any herte light
That ever was born, but if to gret sikenesse
Or to gret sorwe held it in distresse,
So ful it was of beautee and plesance.
And after dinner gonnen they to dance
And sing also, sauf Dorigene alone,
Which made alway hire complaint and hire mone,
For she ne saw him on the dance go,
That was hire husbond, and hire love also:
But nathlees she must a time abide,
And with good hope let hire sorwe slide.
Upon this dance, amonges other men,
Danced a squier before Dorigen,
That fresher was and jolier of array,
As to my dome, than is the month of May.
He singeth, danceth, passing any man,
That is or was sin that the world began;
Therwith he was, if men shuld him discrive,
On of the beste faring men on live,
Yong, strong, and virtuous, and riche, and wise,
And wel beloved, and holden in gret prise.
And shortly, if the soth I tellen shal,
Unweting of this Dorigene at al,
This lusty squier, servant to Venus,
Which that ycleped was Aurelius,
Had loved hire best of any creature
Two yere and more, as was his aventure:
But never dorst he tell hire his grevance,
Withouten cup he dranke all his penance.
He was dispeired, nothing dorst he say,
Sauf in his songes somwhat wold he wray
His wo, as in a general complaining;
He said, he loved, and was beloved nothing.
Of swiche matere made he many layes,
Songes, complaintes, roundels, virelayes;
How that he dorste not his sorwe telle,
But languisheth, as doth a furie in helle;
And die he must, he said, as did Ecco
For Narcissus, that dorst not tell hire wo.
In other maner than ye here me say,
Ne dorst he not to hire his wo bewray,
Sauf that paraventure somtime at danees,
Ther yonge folk kepen hir observances,
It may wel be he loked on hire face
In swiche a wise, as man that axeth grace,
But nothing wiste she of his entent.
Natheles it happed, or they thennes went,
Because that he was hire neighebour,
And was a man of worship and honour,
And had yknowen him of time yore,
They fell in speche, and forth ay more and more
Unto his purpos drow Aurelius;
And whan he saw his time, he saide thus.
Madame, quod he, by God that this world made,
So that I wist it might your herte glade,
I wold that day, that your Arviragus
Went over see, that I Aurelius
Had went ther I shuld never come again;
For wel I wot my service is in vain,
My guerdon n'is but bresting of min herte.
Madame, rueth upon my peines smerte,
For with a word ye may me sleen or save.
Here at your feet God wold that I were grave.
I ne have as now no leiser more to sey:
Have mercy, swete, or ye wol do me dey.
She gan to loke upon Aurelius;
Is this your will (quod she) and say ye thus?
Never erst (quod she) ne wist I what ye ment:
But now, Aurelie, I know your entent.
By thilke God that yaf me soule and lif,
Ne shal I never ben an untrewe wif
In word ne werk, as fer as I have wit,
I wol ben his to whom that I am knit:
Take this for final answer as of me.
But after that in play thus saide she.
Aurelie, (quod she) by high God above
Yet wol I granten you to ben your love,
(Sin I you see so pitously complaine)
Loke, what day that endelong Bretaigne
Ye remue all the rockes, ston by ston,
That they ne letten ship ne bote to gon,
I say, whan ye han made the cost so clene
Of rockes, that ther n'is no ston ysene,
Than wol I love you best of any man,
Have here my trouth, in all that ever I can;
For wel I wote that it shal never betide.
Let swiche folie out of your herte glide.
What deintee shuld a man have in his lif
For to go love another mannes wif,
That hath hire body whan that ever him liketh?
Aurelius ful often sore siketh;
Is ther non other grace in you? quod he.
No, by that lord, quod she, that maked me.
Wo was Aurelie whan that he this herd,
And with a sorweful herte he thus answerd.
Madame, quod he, this were an impossible.
Than moste I die of soden deth horrible.
And with that word he turned him anon.
Tho come hire other frendes many on,
And in the alleyes romed up and doun,
And nothing wist of this conclusioun,
But sodenly begonnen revel newe,
Til that the brighte sonne had lost his hewe,
For the orizont had reft the sonne his light;
(This is as much to sayn as it was night)
And home they gon in mirthe and in solas;
Sauf only wrecche Aurelius, alas!
He to his hous is gon with sorweful herte.
He saith, he may not from his deth asterte.
Him semeth, that he felt his herte cold.
Up to the heven his hondes gan he hold,
And on his knees bare he set him doun,
And in his raving said his orisoun.
For veray wo out of his wit he braide,
He n'iste what he spake, but thus he saide;
With pitous herte his plaint hath he begonne
Unto the goddes, and first unto the sonne.

He said; Apollo, God and governour
Of every plante, herbe, tree, and flour,
That yevest after thy declination
To eche of hem his time and his seson,
As that thin herbergh changeth low and hie;
Lord Phebus, cast thy merciable eie
On wrecche Aurelie, which that am but lorne
Lo, lord, my lady hath my deth ysworne
Withouten gilt, but thy benignitee
Upon my dedly herte have som pitee.
For wel I wot, lord Phebus, if you lest,
Ye may me helpen, sauf my lady, best.
Now voucheth sauf, that I may you devise
How that I may be holpe and in what wise.
Your blisful suster, Lucina the shene,
That of the see is chief goddesse and quene,
Though Neptunus have deitee in the see,
Yet emperice aboven him is she:
Ye knowe wel, lord, that right as hire desire
Is to be quiked and lighted of your fire,
For which she folweth you ful besily,
Right so the see desireth naturelly
To folwen hire, as she that is goddesse
Both in the see and rivers more and lesse.
Wherfore, lord Phebus, this is my request,
Do this miracle, or do min herte brest;
That now next at this opposition,
Which in the signe shal be of the Leon,
As preyeth hire so gret a flood to bring,
That five fadome at the lest it overspring
The highest rock in Armorike Bretaigne,
And let this flood enduren yeres twaine:
Than certes to my lady may I say,
Holdeth your hest, the rockes ben away.
Lord Phebus, this miracle doth for me,
Prey hire she go no faster cours than ye;
I say this, preyeth your suster that she go
No faster cours than ye thise yeres two:
Than shal she ben even at ful alway,
And spring-flood lasten bothe night and day.
And but she vouchesauf in swiche manere
To graunten me my soveraine lady dere,
Prey hire to sinken every rock adoun
Into hire owen derke regioun
Under the ground, ther Pluto dwelleth in,
Or nevermo shal I my lady win.
Thy temple in Delphos wol I barefoot seke.
Lord Phebus, see the teres on my cheke,
And on my peine have som compassioun.
And with that word, in sorwe he fell adoun,
And longe time he lay forth in a trance.
His brother, which that knew of his penance,
Up caught him, and to bed he hath him brought.
Dispeired in this turment and this thought
Let I this woful creature lie,
Chese he for me whether he wol live or die.
Arviragus with hele and gret honour
(As he that was of chevalrie the flour)
Is comen home, and other worthy men:
O, blisful art thou now, thou Dorigen,
That hast thy lusty husbond in thin armes,
The freshe knight, the worthy man of armes,
That loveth thee, as his owen hertes lif:
Nothing list him to be imaginatif,
If any wight had spoke, while he was oute,
To hire of love; he had of that no doute;
He not entendeth to no swiche matere,
But danceth, justeth, and maketh mery chere.
And thus in joye and blisse I let hem dwell,
And of the sike Aurelius wol I tell.

In langour and in turment furious
Two yere and more lay wrecche Aurelius,
Er any foot on erthe he mighte gon;
Ne comfort in this time ne had he non,
Sauf of his brother, which that was a clerk.
He knew of all this wo and all this werk;
For to non other creature certain
Of this matere he dorste no word sain;
Under his brest he bare it more secree,
Than ever did Pamphilus for Galathee.
His brest was hole withouten for to seen,
But in his herte ay was the arwe kene,
And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure
In surgerie is perilous the cure,
But men might touch the arwe or come therby.
His brother wepeth and waileth prively,
Til at the last him fell in remembrance,
That while he was at Orleaunce in France,
As yonge clerkes, that ben likerous
To reden artes that ben curious,
Seken in every halke and every herne
Particuler sciences for to lerne,
He him remembred, that upon a day
At Orleaunce in studie a book he say
Of Magike naturel, which his felaw,
That was that time a bacheler of law,
Al were he ther to lerne another craft,
Had prively upon his desk ylaft;
Which book spake moche of operations
Touching the eight and twenty mansions
That longen to the Mone, and swiche folie
As in our dayes n'is not worth a flie:
For holy cherches feith, in our beleve,
Ne suffreth non illusion us to greve.
And whan this book was in his remembrance,
Anon for joye his herte gan to dance,
And to himself he saied prively;
My brother shal be warished hastily:
For I am siker that ther be sciences,
By which men maken divers apparences,
Swiche as thise subtil tregetoures play.
For oft at festes have I wel herd say,
That tregetoures, within an halle large,
Have made come in a water and a barge,
And in the halle rowen up and doun.
Somtime hath semed come a grim leoun,
And somtime floures spring as in a mede,
Somtime a vine, and grapes white and rede,
Somtime a castel al of lime and ston,
And whan hem liketh voideth it anon:
Thus semeth it to every mannes sight.
Now than conclude I thus, if that I might
At Orleaunce som olde felaw find,
That hath thise Mones mansions in mind,
Or other Magike naturel above,
He shuld wel make my brother have his love.
For with an apparence a clerk may make
To mannes sight, that all the rockes blake
Of Bretaigne were yvoided everich on,
And shippes by the brinke comen and gon,
And in swiche forme endure a day or two:
Than were my brother warished of his wo,
Than must she nedes holden hire behest,
Or elles he shal shame hire at the lest.
What shuld I make a lenger tale of this?
Unto his brothers bed he comen is,
And swiche comfort he yaf him, for to gon
To Orleaunce, that he up stert anon,
And on his way forthward than is he fare,
In hope for to ben lissed of his care.

Whan they were come almost to that citee,
But if it were a two furlong or three,
A yonge clerk roming by himself they mette,
Which that in Latine thriftily hem grette.
And after that he sayd a wonder thing ;
I know, quod he, the cause of your coming :
And or they forther any foote went,
He told hem all that was in hir entent.
This Breton clerk him axed of felawes,
The which he had yknowen in olde dawes,
And he answered him that they dede were,
For which he wept ful often many a tere.
Doun of his hors Aurelius light anon,
And forth with this magicien is gon
Home to his hous, and made hem wel at ese :
Hem lacked no vitaille that might hem plese.
So wel arraied hous as ther was on,
Aurelius in his lif saw never non.
He shewed him, or they went to soupere,
Forestes, parkes ful of wilde dere.
Ther saw he hartes with hir hornes hie,
The gretest that were ever seen with eie.
He saw of hem an hundred slain with houndes,
And som with arwes blede of bitter woundes.
He saw, whan voided were the wilde dere,
Thise fauconers upon a faire rivere,
That with hir haukes han the heron slain.
Tho saw he knightes justen in a plain.
And after this he did him swiche plesance,
That he him shewed his lady on a dance,
On which himselven danced, as him thought.
And whan this maister, that this magike wrought,
Saw it was time, he clapped his hondes two,
And farewel, al the revel is ago.
And yet remued they never out of the hous,
While they saw all thise sightes merveillous ;
But in his studie, ther his bookes be,
They saten still, and no wight but they three.
To him this maister called his squier,
And sayd him thus, may we go to souper ?
Almost an houre it is, I undertake,
Sin I you bade our souper for to make,
Whan that thise worthy men wenten with me
Into my studie, ther my bookes be.
Sire, quod this squier, whan it liketh you,
It is al redy, though ye wol right now.
Go we than soupe, quod he, as for the best,
Thise amorous folk somtime moste han rest.
At after souper fell they in tretee
What summe shuld this maisters guerdon be,
To remue all the rockes of Bretaigne,
And eke from Gerounde to the mouth of Saine.
He made it strange, and swore, so God him save,
Lesse than a thousand pound he wold not have,
Ne gladly for that summe he wold not gon.
Aurelius with blisful herte anon
Answered thus ; fie on a thousand pound :
This wide world, which that men sayn is round,
I wold it yeve, if I were lord of it.
This bargaine is ful-drive, for we ben knit ;
Ye shul be paied trewely by my trouth.
But loketh, for non negligence or slouth,
Ye tarie us here no lenger than to morwe.
Nay, quod this clerk, have here my faith to borwe.
To bed is gon Aurelius whan him lest,
And wel nigh all that night he had his rest,
What for his labour, and his hope of blisse,
His woful herte of penance had a lisse.
Upon the morwe whan that it was day,
To Bretaigne token they the righte way,
Aurelie, and this magicien him beside,
And ben descended ther they wold abide :
And this was, as the bookes me remember,
The colde frosty seson of December.
Phebus waxe old, and hewed like laton,
That in his hote declination
Shone as the burned gold, with stremes bright ;
But now in Capricorne adoun he light,
Wher as he shone ful pale, I dare wel sain.
The bitter frostes with the sleet and rain
Destroyed han the grene in every yerd.
Janus sit by the fire with double berd,
And drinketh of his bugle horn the wine :
Beforn him stant braune of the tusked swine,
And *nowel* crieth every lusty man.
Aurelius in all that ever he can,
Doth to his maister chere and reverence,
And praieth him to don his diligence
To bringen him out of his peines smerte,
Or with a swerd that he wold slit his herte.
This sotil clerk swiche routh hath on this man,
That night and day he spedeth him, that he can,
To wait a time of his conclusion ;
This is to sayn, to make illusion,
By swiche an apparence or joglerie,
(I can no termes of Astrologie)
That she and every wight shuld wene and say,
That of Bretaigne the rockes were away,
Or elles they were sonken under ground.
So at the last he hath his time yfound
To make his japes and his wretchednesse
Of swiche a superstitious cursednesse.
His tables Toletanes forth he brought
Ful wel corrected, that ther lacked nought,
Nother his collect, ne his expans yeres,
Nother his rotes, ne his other geres,
As ben his centres, and his argumentes,
And his proportionel convenientes
For his equations in every thing.
And by his eighte speres in his werking,
He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove
Fro the hed of thilke fix Aries above,
That in the ninthe spere considered is.
Ful sotilly he calculed all this.
Whan he had found his firste mansion,
He knew the remenant by proportion ;
And knew the rising of his mone wel,
And in whos face, and terme, and every del ;
And knew ful wel the mones mansion
Accordant to his operation ;
And knew also his other observances,
For swiche illusions and swiche meschances,
As hethen folk used in thilke daies.
For which no lenger maketh he delaies,
But thurgh his magike, for a day or tway,
It semed all the rockes were away.
Aurelius, which that despeired is,
Whether he shal han his love, or fare amis,
Awaiteth night and day on this miracle :
And whan he knew that ther was non obstacle,
That voided were thise rockes everich on,
Doun to his maisters feet he fell anon,
And sayd ; I woful wretch Aurelius,
Thanke you, my lord, and lady min Venus,
That me han holpen fro my cares cold.
And to the temple his way forth hath he hold,
Theras he knew he shuld his lady see.
And whan he saw his time, anon right he
With dredful herte and with ful humble chere
Salued hath his soveraine lady dere.

My rightful lady, quod this woful man,
Whom I most drede, and love, as I best can,
And lothest were of all this world displese,
N'ere it that I for you have swiche disese,
That I must die here at your foot anon,
Nought wold I tell how me is wo begon.
But certes other must I die or plaine;
Ye sle me gilteles for veray peine.
But of my deth though that ye han no routh,
Aviseth you, or that ye breke your trouth:
Repenteth you for thilke God above,
Or ye me sle, because that I you love.
For, madame, wel ye wote what ye have hight;
Not that I chalenge any thing of right
Of you, my soveraine lady, but of grace;
But in a gardin yond, in swiche a place,
Ye wote right wel what ye behighten me,
And in myn hond your trouthe plighten ye,
To love me best; God wote ye saied so,
Although that I unworthy be therto;
Madame, I speke it for the honour of you,
More than to save my hertes lif right now:
I have don so as ye commanded me,
And if ye vouchesauf, ye may go see.
Doth as you list, have your behest in mind,
For quick or ded, right ther ye shul me find:
In you lith all to do me live or dey,
But wel I wote the rockes ben awey.
He taketh his leve, and she astonied stood;
In all hire face n'as o drope of blood:
She wened never han come in swiche a trappe.
Alas! quod she, that ever this shuld happe!
For wend I never by possibilitee,
That swiche a monstre or mervaille might be;
It is again the processe of nature.
And home she goth a sorweful creature,
For veray fere unnethes may she go.
She wepeth, waileth all a day or two,
And swouneth, that it routhe was to see:
But why it was, to no wight tolde she,
For out of toun was gon Arviragus.
But to hireself she spake, and saied thus,
With face pale, and with ful sory chere,
In hire complaint, as ye shul after here.
Alas! quod she, on thee, fortune, I plain,
That unware hast me wrapped in thy chain:
Fro which to escapen, wote I no soccour,
Sauf only deth, or elles dishonour:
On of thise two behoveth me to chese.
But natheles, yet had I lever lese
My lif, than of my body have a shame,
Or know myselven false, or lese my name;
And with my deth I may be quit ywis.
Hath ther not many a noble wif or this,
And many a maid yslaine hireself, alas!
Rather than with hire body don trespas?
Yes certes; lo, thise stories bere witnesse.
Whan thirty tyrants ful of cursednesse
Had slain Phidon in Athens at the fest,
They commanded his doughtren for to arrest,
And bringen hem beforne hem in despit
Al naked, to fulfill hir foule delit;
And in hir fadres blood they made hem dance
Upon the pavement, God yeve hem meschance.
For which thise woful maidens ful of drede,
Rather than they wold lese hir maidenhede,
They prively ben stert into a welle,
And dreint hemselven, as the bookes telle.
They of Messene let enquere and seke
Of Lacedomie fifty maidens eke,
On which they wolden don hir lecherie:
But ther was non of all that compagnie
That she n'as slaine, and with a glad entent
Chees rather for to dien, than assent
To ben oppressed of hire maidenhede.
Why shuld I than to dien ben in drede?
Lo eke the tyrant Aristoclides,
That loved a maid hight Stimphalides,
Whan that hire father slaine was on a night,
Unto Dianes temple goth she right,
And hente the image in hire handes two,
Fro which image wold she never go,
No wight hire handes might of it arrace,
Til she was slaine right in the selve place.
Now sin that maidens hadden swiche despit
To be defouled with mannes foule delit,
Wel ought a wif rather hireselven sle,
Than be defouled, as it thinketh me.
What shal I sayn of Hasdrubales wif,
That at Cartage beraft hireself hire lif?
For whan she saw that Romains wan the toun;
She toke hire children all, and skipt adoun
Into the fire, and chees rather to die,
Than any Romain did hire vilanie.
Hath not Lucrece yslaine hireself, alas!
At Rome, whan that she oppressed was
Of Tarquine? for hire thought it was a shame
To liven, whan she hadde lost hire name.
The seven maidens of Milesie also
Han slaine hemself for veray drede and wo,
Rather than folk of Gaule hem shuld oppresse.
Mo than a thousand stories, as I gesse,
Coude I now tell as touching this matere.
Whan Abradate was slain, his wif so dere
Hireselven slow, and let hire blood to glide
In Abradates woundes, depe and wide,
And sayd, my body at the leste way
Ther shal no wight defouleu, if I may.
What shuld I mo ensamples hereof sain?
Sin that so many han hemselven slain
Wel rather than they wold defouled be,
I wol conclude that it is bet for me
To sle myself than be defouled thus.
I wol be trewe unto Arviragus,
Or elles sle myself in some manere,
As did Demotiones doughter dere,
Because she wolde not defouled be.
O Sedasus, it is ful gret pitee
To reden how thy doughtren died, alas!
That slowe hemselven for swiche maner cas.
As gret a pitee was it or wel more,
The Theban maiden, that for Nichanore
Hireselven slow, right for swiche manere wo.
Another Theban mayden did right so,
For on of Macedoine had hire oppressed,
She with hire deth hire maidenhed redressed.
What shal I sain of Nicerates wif,
That for swiche cas beraft hireself hire lif?
How trewe was eke to Alcibiades
His love, that for to dien rather chees,
Than for to suffre his body unburied be?
Lo, which a wif was Alceste eke? (quod she)
What sayth Homere of good Penelope?
All Grece knoweth of hire chastitee.
Parde of Laodomia is written thus,
That whan at Troye was slain Prothesilaus,
No lenger wolde she live after his day.
The same of noble Portia tell I may;
Withouten Brutus coude she not live,
To whom she had all hol hire herte yeve.

The parfit wifhood of Artemisie
Honoured is thurghout all Barbarie.
O Teuta quene, thy wifly chastitee
To alle wives may a mirrour be.
Thus plained Dorigene a day or twey,
Purposing ever that she wolde dey;
But natheles upon the thridde night
Home came Arviragus, the worthy knight,
And axed hire why that she weep so sore:
And she gan wepen ever lenger the more.
Alas, quod she, that ever I was yborne!
Thus have I said, (quod she) thus have I sworne.
And told him all, as ye have herd before:
It nedeth not reherse it you no more.
This husbond with glad chere in frendly wise
Answerd and sayd, as I shal you devise.
Is ther ought elles, Dorigene, but this?
Nay, nay, quod she, God helpe me so, as wis
This is to much, and it were Goddes will.
Ye, wif, quod he, let slepen that is still,
It may be wel paraventure yet to-day.
Ye shal your trouthe holden by my fay.
For God so wisly have mercy on me,
I had wel lever stiked for to be,
For veray love which that I to you have,
But if ye shuld your trouthe kepe and save.
Trouth is the hiest thing that man may kepe.
But with that word he brast anon to wepe,
And sayd; I you forbede on peine of deth,
That never while you lasteth lif or breth,
To no wight tell ye this misaventure.
As I may best I wol my wo endure.
Ne make no contenance of hevinesse,
That folk of you may demen harme or gesse.
And forth he cleped a squier and a maid.
Goth forth anon with Dorigene, he said,
And bringeth hire to swiche a place anon.
They take hir leve, and on hir way they gon:
But they ne wisten why she thider went,
She n'olde no wight tellen hire entent.
This squier, which that highte Aurelius,
On Dorigene that was so amorous,
Of aventure happed hire to mete
Amid the toun, right in the quikkest strete,
As she was boun to go the way forthright
Toward the gardin, ther as she had hight.
And he was to the gardinward also;
For wel he spied whan she wolde go
Out of hire hous, to any maner place:
But thus they met of aventure or grace,
And he saluetb hire with glad entent,
And axeth of hire whiderward she went.
And she answered, half as she were mad,
Unto the gardin, as myn husbond bad,
My trouthe for to hold, alas! alas!
Aurelius gan wondren on this cas,
And in his herte had gret compassion
Of hire, and of hire lamentation,
And of Arviragus the worthy knight,
That bad hire holden all that she had hight,
So loth him was his wif shuld breke hire trouthe.
And in his herte he caught of it gret routhe,
Considering the best on every side,
That fro his lust yet were him lever abide,
Than do so high a cherlish wretchednesse
Ageins fraunchise, and alle gentillesse;
For which in fewe wordes sayd he thus.
Madame, say to your lord Arviragus,
That sin I see the grete gentillesse
Of him, and eke I see wel your distresse,
That him were lever have shame (and that were routhe)
Than ye to me shuld breken thus your trouthe,
I hadde wel lever ever to suffren wo,
Than to depart the love betwix you two.
I you relese, madame, into your hond
Quit every seurement and every bond,
That ye han made to me, as herebeforne,
Sin thilke time that ye were yborne.
Have here my trouthe, I shal you never repreve
Of no behest, and here I take my leve,
As of the trewest and the beste wif,
That ever yet I knew in all my lif.
But every wif beware of hire behest;
On Dorigene remembreth at the lest.
Thus can a squier don a gentil dede,
As wel as can a knight, withouten drede.
She thanketh him upon hire knees bare,
And home unto hire husbond is she fare,
And told him all, as ye han herd me sayd:
And, trusteth me, he was so wel apayd,
That it were impossible me to write.
What shuld I lenger of this cas endite?
Arviragus and Dorigene his wif
In soveraine blisse leden forth hir lif,
Never eft ne was ther anger hem betwene;
He cherished hire as though she were a quene,
And she was to him trewe for evermore:
Of thise two folk ye get of me no more.
Aurelius, that his cost hath all forlorne,
Curseth the time, that ever he was borne.
Alas! quod he, alas that I behight
Of pured gold a thousand pound of wight
Unto this philosophre! how shal I do?
I see no more, but that I am fordo.
Min heritage mote I nedes sell,
And ben a begger, here I n'ill not dwell,
And shamen all my kinrede in this place,
But I of him may geten better grace.
But natheles I wol of him assay
At certain daies yere by yere to pay,
And thanke him of his grete curtesie.
My trouthe wol I kepe, I wol not lie.
With herte sore he goth unto his cofre,
And broughte gold unto this philosophre,
The value of five hundred pound I gesse,
And him besecheth of his gentillesse
To graunt him daies of the remenaunt,
And sayde; maister, I dare wel make avaunt,
I failled never of my trouthe as yet.
For sikerly my dette shal be quit
Towardes you, how so that ever I fare
To gon a begging in my kirtle bare:
But wold ye vouchen sauf upon seurtee
Two yere or three for to respiten me,
Than were I wel, for elles mote I sell
Min heritage, ther is no more to tell.
This Philosophre sobrely answerd,
And saied thus, whan he thise wordes herd;
Have I not holden covenant to thee?
Yes certes, wel and trewely, quod he.
Hast thou not had thy lady as thee liketh?
No, no, quod he, and sorwefully he siketh.
What was the cause? tell me if thou can.
Aurelius his tale anon began,
And told him all as ye han herd before,
It nedeth not reherse it any more.
He sayd, Arviragus of gentillesse
Had lever die in sorwe and in distresse,
Than that his wif were of hire trouthe fals.

The sorwe of Dorigene he told him als,
How loth hire was to ben a wicked wif,
And that she lever had lost that day hire lif;
And that her trouth she swore thurgh innocence;
She never erst hadde herd speke of apparence:
That made me han of hire so gret pitee,
And right as freely as he sent hire to me,
As freely sent I hire to him again:
This is all and som, ther n'is no more to sain.
The Philosophre answerd; leve brother,
Everich of you did gentilly to other:
Thou art a squier, and he is a knight,
But God forbede for his blisful might,
But if a clerk coud don a gentil dede
As wel as any of you, it is no drede.
Sire, I relese thee thy thousand pound,
As thou right now were crope out of the ground,
Ne never er now ne haddest knowen me.
For, sire, I wol not take a peny of thee
For all my craft, ne nought for my travaille:
Thou hast ypaied wel for my vitaille.
It is ynough, and farewel, have good day.
And toke his hors, and forth he goth his way.
Lordings, this question wold I axen now,
Which was the moste free, as thinketh you?
Now telleth me, or that ye further wende.
I can no more, my tale is at an ende.

THE DOCTOURES TALE.

THE DOCTOURES PROLOGUE.

Ye, let that passen, quod oure Hoste, as now.
Sire Doctour of Physike, I prey you,
Tell us a tale of som honest matere.
It shal be don, if that ye wol it here,
Said this doctour, and his tale began anon.
Now, good men, quod he, herkeneth everich on.

THE DOCTOURES TALE.

There was, as telleth Titus Livius,
A knight, that cleped was Virginius,
Fulfilled of honour and worthinesse,
And strong of frendes, and of gret richesse.
This knight a doughter hadde by his wif.
No children had he mo in all his lif.
Faire was this maid in excellent beautee
Aboven every wight that man may see:
For nature hath with soveraine diligence
Yformed hire in so gret excellence,
As though she wolde sayn, lo, I nature,
Thus can I forme and peint a creature,
Whan that me list; who can me contrefete?
Pigmalion? not, though he ay forge and bete,
Or grave, or peinte: for I dare wel sain,
Apelles, Xeuxis, shulden werche in vain,
Other to grave, or peinte, or forge, or bete,
If they presumed me to contrefete.
For he that is the former principal,
Hath maked me his vicaire general
To forme and peinten erthly creatures
Right as me list, and eche thing in my cure is
Under the mone, that may wane and waxe.
And for my werk right nothing wol I axe;
My lord and I ben ful of on accord.
I made hire to the worship of my lord;
So do I all min other creatures,
What colour that they han, or what figures.
Thus semeth me that nature wolde say.
This maid of age twelf yere was and tway,
In which that nature hadde swiche delit.
For right as she can peint a lily whit
And red a rose, right with swiche peinture
She peinted hath this noble creature
Er she was borne, upon hire limmes free,
Wheras by right swiche colours shulden be:
And Phebus died hath hire tresses grete,
Like to the stremes of his burned hete.
And if that excellent were hire beautee,
A thousand fold more vertuous was she.
In hire ne lacked no condition,
That is to preise, as by discretion.
As wel in gost as body, chast war she:
For which she floured in virginitee,
With all humilitee and abstinence,
With all attemperance and patience,
With mesure eke, of boring and array.
Discrete she was in answering alway,
Though she were wise as Pallas, dare I sain,
Hire facounde eke ful womanly and plain,
No contrefeted termes hadde she
To semen wise; but after hire degree
She spake, and all hire wordes more and lesse
Souning in vertue and in gentillesse.
Shamefast she was in maidens shamefastnesse,
Constant in herte, and ever in besinesse
To drive hire out of idel slogardie:
Bacchus had of hire mouth right no maistrie.
For wine and youthe don Venus encrese,
As men in fire wol casten oile and grese.
And of hire owen vertue unconstreined,
She hath hireself ful often sike yfeined,
For that she wolde fleen the compagnie,
Wher likely was to treten of folie,
As is at festes, at revels, and at dances,
That ben occasions of daliances.
Swiche thinges maken children for to be
To sone ripe and bold, as men may see,
Which is ful perilous, and hath ben yore;
For al to sone may she lernen lore
Of boldnesse, whan she woxen is a wif.
And ye maistresses in your olde lif,
That lordes doughters han in governance,
Ne taketh of my wordes displesance:
Thinketh that ye ben set in governinges
Of lordes doughters, only for two thinges

Other for ye han kept your honestee,
Or elles for ye han fallen in freeltee,
And knowen wel ynough the olde dance,
And han forsaken fully swiche meschance
For evermo : therfore for Cristes sake
To teche hem vertue loke that ye ne slake.
A theef of venison, that hath forlaft
His likerousnesse, and all his olde craft,
Can kepe a forest best of any man :
Now kepeth hem wel, for if ye wol ye can.
Loke wel, that ye unto no vice assent,
Lest ye be damned for your wikke entent,
For who so doth, a traytour is certain :
And taketh kepe of that I shal you sain ;
Of alle treson soveraine pestilence
Is, whan a wight betrayeth innocence.
Ye fathers, and ye mothers eke also,
Though ye han children, be it on or mo,
Your is the charge of all hir surveance,
While that they ben under your governance.
Beth ware, that by ensample of your living,
Or by your negligence in chastising,
That they ne perish : for I dare wel saye,
If that they don, ye shul it dere abeye.
Under a shepherd soft and negligent,
The wolf hath many a shepe and lamb to-rent.
Sufficeth this ensample now as here,
For I mote turne agen to my matere.
This maid, of which I tell my tale expresse,
She kept hireself, hire neded no maistresse ;
For in hire living maidens mighten rede,
As in a book, every good word and dede,
That longeth to a maiden vertuous :
She was so prudent and so bounteous.
For which the fame out sprong on every side
Both of hire beautee and hire bountee wide :
That thurgh the lond they preised hire ech one,
That loved vertue, sauf envie alone,
That sory is of other mannes wele,
And glad is of his sorwe and his unhele.
The doctour maketh this descriptioun.
This maiden on a day went in the toun
Toward a temple, with hire mother dere,
As is of yonge maidens the manere.
Now was ther than a justice in that toun,
That governour was of that regioun :
And so befell, this juge his eyen cast
Upon this maid, avising hire ful fast,
As she came forth by ther this juge stood :
Anon his herte changed and his mood,
So was he caught with beautee of this maid,
And to himself ful prively he said,
This maiden shal be min for any man.
Anon the fend into his herte ran,
And taught him sodenly, that he by sleight
This maiden to his purpos winnen might.
For certes, by no force, ne by no mede,
Him thought he was not able for to spede ;
For she was strong of frendes, and eke she
Confermed was in swiche soveraine bountee,
That wel he wist he might hire never winne,
As for to make hire with hire body sinne.
For which with gret deliberatioun
He sent after a cherl was in the toun,
The which he knew for sotil and for bold.
This juge unto this cherl his tale hath told
In secree wise, and made him to ensure,
He shulde tell it to no creature,
And if he did, he shulde lese his hede.
And whan assented was this cursed rede,
Glad was the juge, and maked him gret chere,
And yaf him yeftes precious and dere.
Whan shapen was all hir conspiracie
Fro point to point, how that his lecherie
Parformed shulde be ful sotilly,
As ye shul here it after openly,
Home goth this cherl, that highte Claudius.
This false juge, that highte Appius,
(So was his name, for it is no fable,
But knowen for an historial thing notable :
The sentence of it soth is out of doute)
This false juge goth now fast aboute
To hasten his delit all that he may.
And so befell, sone after on a day
This false juge, as telleth us the storie,
As he was wont, sat in his consistorie,
And yaf his domes upon sondry cas ;
This false cherl came forth a ful gret pas,
And saide ; lord, if that it be your will,
As doth me right upon this pitous bill,
In which I plaine upon Virginius.
And if that he wol sayn it is not thus,
I wol it preve, and finden good witnesse,
That soth is that my bille wol expresse.
The juge answerd, of this in his absence
I may not yeve diffinitif sentence.
Let don him call, and I wol gladly here ;
Thou shalt have right, and no wrong as now here.
Virginius came to wete the juges will,
And right anon was red this cursed bill ;
The sentence of it was as ye shul here.
To you, my lord sire Appius so dere,
Sheweth your poure servant Claudius,
How that a knight called Virginius,
Agein the lawe, agein all equitee,
Holdeth, expresse agein the will of me,
My servant, which that is my thral by right,
Which from min hous was stolen on a night
While that she was ful yong, I wol it preve
By witnesse, lord, so that it you not greve ;
She n'is his doughter nought, what so he say
Wherfore to you, my lord the juge, I pray ;
Yelde me my thral, if that it be your will.
Lo, this was all the sentence of his bill.
Virginius gan upon the cherl behold ;
But hastily, er he his tale told,
And wold han preved it, as shuld a knight,
And eke by witnessing of many a wight,
That all was false, that said his adversary,
This cursed juge wolde nothing tary,
Ne here a word more of Virginius,
But yave his jugement, and saide thus.
I deme anon this cherl his servant have.
Thou shalt no lenger in thin hous hire save.
Go bring hire forth, and put hire in our ward.
The cherl shal have his thral ; thus I award.
And whan this worthy knight Virginius,
Thurgh sentence of this justice Appius,
Muste by force his dere doughter yeven
Unto the juge, in lecherie to liven,
He goth him home, and set him in his hall,
And let anon his dere doughter call :
And with a face ded as ashen cold,
Upon hire humble face he gan behold,
With fadres pitee stiking thurgh his herte,
Al wold he from his purpos not converte.
Doughter, quod he, Virginia by thy name,
Ther ben two waies, other deth or shame,
That thou must suffre, alas that I was bore !
For never thou deservedest wherfore

To dien with a swerd or with a knif.
O dere doughter, ender of my lif,
Which I have fostred up with swiche plesance,
That thou were never out of my remembrance;
O doughter, which that art my laste wo,
And in my lif my laste joye also,
O gemme of chastitee, in patience
Take thou thy deth, for this is my sentence;
For love and not for hate thou must be ded,
My pitous hond must smiten of thin hed.
Alas that ever Appius thee say!
Thus hath he falsely juged thee to-day.
And told hire all the cas, as ye before
Han herd, it nedeth not to tell it more.
O mercy, dere father, quod this maid.
And with that word she both hire armes laid
About his necke, as she was wont to do,
(The teres brast out of hire eyen two,)
And said, O goode father, shal I die?
Is ther no grace? is ther no remedie?
No certes, dere doughter min, quod he.
Than yeve me leiser, father min, quod she,
My deth for to complaine a litel space:
For parde Jepte yave his doughter grace
For to complaine, or he hire slow, alas!
And God it wot, nothing was hire trespas,
But for she ran hire father first to see,
To welcome him with gret solempnitee.
And with that word she fell aswoune anon,
And after, whan hire swouning was agon,
She riseth up, and to hire father said:
Blessed be God, that I shall die a maid.
Yeve me my deth, or that I have a shame.
Doth with your child your wille a goddes name.
And with that word she praied him ful oft,
That with his swerd he wolde smite hire soft;
And with that word, aswoune again she fell.
Hire father, with ful sorweful herte and will,
Hire hed of smote, and by the top it hent,
And to the juge he gan it to present,
As he sat yet in dome in consistorie.
And whan the juge it saw, as saith the storie,
He bad to take him, and anhang him fast.
But right anon a thousand peple in thrast
To save the knight, for routh and for pitee,
For knowen was the false iniquitee.
The peple anon had suspect in this thing
By maner of the cherles chalenging,
That it was by the assent of Appius;
They wisten wel that he was lecherous.
For which unto this Appius they gon,
And caste him in a prison right anon,
Wheras he slow himself: and Claudius,
That servant was unto this Appius,
Was demed for to hange upon a tree;
But that Virginius of his pitee
So prayed for him, that he was exiled,
And elles certes had he ben begiled:
The remenant were anhanged, more and lesse,
That were consentant of this cursednesse.
Here men may see how sin hath his merite:
Beth ware, for no man wot whom God wol smite
In no degree, ne in which maner wise
The worme of conscience may agrise
Of wicked lif, though it so privee be,
That no man wote therof, sauf God and he:
For be he lewed man or elles lered,
He n'ot how sone that he shal ben afered.
Therfore I rede you this conseil take,
Forsaketh sinne, or sinne you forsake.

THE PARDONERES TALE.

THE PARDONERES PROLOGUE.

Our Hoste gan to swere as he were wood;
Harow! (quod he) by nailes and by blood,
This was a false cherl, and a false justice.
As shameful deth, as herte can devise,
Come to thise juges and hir advocas.
Algate this sely maide is slain, alas!
Alas! to dere abought she hire beautee.
Wherfore I say, that al day man may see,
That yeftes of fortune and of nature
Ben cause of deth to many a creature.
Hire beautee was hire deth, I dare wel sain;
Alas! so pitously as she was slain.
Of bothe yeftes, that I speke of now,
Men han ful often more for harm than prow.
But trewely, min owen maister dere,
This was a pitous tale for to here:
But natheles, passe over, is no force.
I pray to God so save thy gentil corps,
And eke thyn urinals, and thy jordanes,
Thin Ypocras, and eke thy Galianes,
And every boist ful of thy letuarie,
God blesse hem and our lady Seinte Marie.
So mote I the, thou art a propre man,
And like a prelat by Seint Ronian;
Said I not wel? I cannot speke in terme;
But wel I wot, thou dost min herte to erme,
That I have almost caught a cardiacle:
By *corpus domini* but I have triacle,
Or elles a draught of moist and corny ale,
Or but I here anon a mery tale,
Myn herte is lost for pitee of this maid.
Thou *bel amy*, thou pardoner, he said,
Tel us som mirth of japes right anon.
It shal be don, quod he, by Seint Ronion.
But first (quod he) here at this ale-stake
I wol both drinke, and biten on a cake.
But right anon thise gentiles gan to crie;
Nay, let him tell us of no ribaudrie.
Tell us som moral thing, that we mow lere,
Som wit, and thanne wol we gladly here.
I graunte ywis, quod he, but I must thinke
Upon som honest thing, while that I drinke.

THE PARDONERES TALE.

Lordings, quod he, in chirche whan I preche,
I peine me to have an hautein speche,
And ring it out, as round as goth a bell,
For I can all by rote that I tell.
My teme is alway on, and ever was ;
Radix malorum est cupiditas.
First I pronounce whennes that I come,
And than my bulles shew I all and some :
Our liege lordes sele on my patente,
That shew I first my body to warrente,
That no man be so bold, ne preest ne clerk,
Me to disturbe of Cristes holy werk.
And after that than tell I forth my tales.
Bulles of popes, and of cardinales,
Of patriarkes, and bishoppes I shewe,
And in Latin I speke a wordes fewe,
To saffron with my predication,
And for to stere men to devotion.
Than shew I forth my longe cristal stones,
Ycrammed ful of cloutes and of bones,
Relikes they ben, as wenen they echon.
Than have I in laton a shulder bone,
Which that was of an holy Jewes shepe.
Good men, say I, take of my wordes kepe :
If that this bone be washe in any well,
If cow, or calf, or shepe, or oxe swell,
That any worm hath ete, or worm ystonge,
Take water of that well, and wash his tonge,
And it is hole anon : and forthermore
Of pockes, and of scab, and every sore
Shal every shepe be hole, that of this well
Drinketh a draught ; take kepe of that I tell.
If that the good man, that the bestes oweth,
Wol every weke, er that the cok him croweth,
Fasting ydrinken of this well a draught,
As thilke holy Jew our eldres taught,
His bestes and his store shal multiplie.
And, sires, also it heleth jalousie.
For though a man be falle in jalous rage,
Let maken with this water his potage,
And never shal he more his wif mistrist,
Though he the soth of hire defaute wist;
Al had she taken preestes two or three.
Here is a mitaine eke, that ye may see :
He that his hand wol put in this mitaine,
He shal have multiplying of his graine,
Whan he hath sowen, be it whete or otes,
So that he offer pens or elles grotes.
And, men and women, o thing warne I you :
If any wight be in this chirche now,
That hath don sinne horrible, so that he
Dare not for shame of it yshriven be:
Or any woman, be she yong or old,
That hath ymade hire husbond cokewold,
Swiche folk shul han no power ne no grace
To offer to my relikes in this place.
And who so findeth him out of swiche blame,
He wol come up and offer in Goddes name,
And I assoyle him by the auctoritee,
Which that by bulle ygranted was to me.
By this gaude have I wonnen yere by yere
An hundred mark, sin I was pardonere.
I stonde like a clerk in my pulpet,
And whan the lewed peple is doun yset,
I preche so as ye han herd before,
And tell an hundred false japes more.
Than peine I me to stretchen forth my necke,
And est and west upon the peple I becke,
As doth a dove, sitting upon a berne :
Myn hondes and my tonge gon so yerne,
That it is joye to see my besinesse.
Of avarice and of swiche cursednesse
Is all my preching, for to make hem free
To yeve hir pens, and namely unto me.
For min entente is not but for to winne,
And nothing for correction of sinne.
I recke never whan that they be beried,
Though that hir soules gon a blake beried.
For certes many a predication
Cometh oft time of evil entention ;
Som for plesance of folk, and flaterie,
To ben avanced by hypocrisie ;
And som for vaine glorie, and som for hate.
For whan I dare non other wayes debate,
Than wol I sting him with my tonge smerte
In preching, so that he shal not asterte
To ben defamed falsely, if that he
Hath trespased to my brethren or to me.
For though I telle not his propre name,
Men shal wel knowen that it is the same
By signes, and by other circumstances.
Thus quite I folk, that don us displesances :
Thus spit I out my venime under hewe
Of holinesse, to seme holy and trewe.
But shortly min entente I wol devise,
I preche of nothing but for covetise.
Therfore my teme is yet, and ever was,
Radix malorum est cupiditas.
Thus can I preche again the same vice
Which that I use, and that is avarice.
But though myself be gilty in that sinne,
Yet can I maken other folk to twinne
From avarice, and sore hem to repente.
But that is not my principal entente ;
I preche nothing but for covetise.
Of this matere it ought ynough suffise.
Than tell I hem ensamples many on
Of olde stories longe time agon.
For lewed peple loven tales olde;
Swiche thinges can they wel report and holde
What ? trowen ye, that whiles I may preche
And winnen gold and silver for I teche,
That I wol live in poverte wilfully ?
Nay, nay, I thought it never trewely.
For I wol preche and beg in sondry londes,
I wol not do no labour with min hondes,
Ne make baskettes for to live therby,
Because I wol not beggen idelly.
I wol non of the apostles contrefete :
I wol have money, wolle, chese, and whete,
Al were it yeven of the pourest page,
Or of the pourest widewe in a village :
Al shulde hire children sterven for famine.
Nay, I wol drinke the licour of the vine,
And have a joly wenche in every toun.
But herkeneth, lordings, in conclusioun,
Your liking is that I shal tell a tale.
Now I have dronke a draught of corny ale,
By God I hope I shal you tell a thing,
That shal by reson ben at your liking :
For though myself be a ful vicious man,
A moral tale yet I you tellen can,
Which I am wont to prechen, for to winne.
Now hold your pees, my tale I wol beginne.

In Flandres whilom was a compagnie
Of yonge folk, that haunteden folie,

As hasard, riot, stewes, and tavernes;
Wheras with harpes, lutes, and giternes,
They dance and plaie at dis bothe day and night,
And ete also, and drinke over hir might;
Thurgh which they don the devil sacrifice
Within the devils temple, in cursed wise,
By superfluitee abhominable.
Hir othes ben so gret and so damnable,
That it is grisly for to here hem swere.
Our blisful lordes body they to-tere;
Hem thought the Jewes rent him not ynough;
And eche of hem at others sinne lough.
And right anon in comen tombesteres
Fetis and smale, and yonge fruitesteres,
Singers with harpes, baudes, wafereres,
Which ben the veray devils officeres,
To kindle and blow the fire of lecherie,
That is annexed unto glotonie.
The holy writ take I to my witnesse,
That luxurie is in wine and dronkenesse.
Lo, how that dronken Loth unkindely
Lay by his daughters two unwetingly,
So dronke he was he n'iste what he wrought.
Herodes, who so wel the stories sought,
Whan he of wine replete was at his feste,
Right at his owen table he yave his heste
To sleen the Baptist John ful gilteles.
Seneca saith a good word douteles:
He saith he can no difference find
Betwix a man that is out of his mind,
And a man whiche that is dronkelew:
But that woodnesse, yfallen in a shrew,
Persevereth lenger than doth dronkenesse.
O glotonie, full of cursednesse;
O cause first of our confusion,
O original of our damnation,
Til Crist had bought us with his blood again.
Loketh, how dere, shortly for to sain,
Abought was thilke cursed vilanie:
Corrupt was all this world for glotonie.
Adam our father, and his wif also,
Fro Paradis, to labour and to wo,
Were driven for that vice, it is no drede.
For while that Adam fasted, as I rede,
He was in Paradis, and whan that he
Ete of the fruit defended on a tree,
Anon he was out cast to wo and peine.
O glotonie, on thee wel ought us plaine.
O, wist a man how many maladies
Folwen of excesse and of glotonies,
He wolde ben the more mesurable
Of his diete, sitting at his table.
Alas! the shorte throte, the tendre mouth,
Maketh that Est and West, and North and South,
In erthe, in air, in water, men to-swinke,
To gete a gloton deintee mete and drinke.
Of this matere, O Poule, wel canst thou trete.
Mete unto wombe, and wombe eke unto mete
Shal God destroien bothe, as Paulus saith.
Alas! a foule thing is it by my faith
To say this word, and fouler is the dede,
Whan man so drinketh of the white and rede,
That of his throte he maketh his privee
Thurgh thilke cursed superfluitee.
The Apostle saith weping ful pitously,
Ther walken many, of which you told have I,
I say it now weping with pitous vois,
That they ben enemies of Cristes crois:
Of whiche the end is deth, womb is hir God.
O wombe, O belly, stinking is thy cod,
Fulfilled of dong and of corruptioun;
At either end of thee foule is the soun.
How gret labour and cost is thee to find!
Thise cokes how they stamp, and strein, and grind,
And turnen substance into accident,
To fulfill all thy likerous talent!
Out of the harde bones knocken they
The mary, for they casten nought away,
That may go thurgh the gullet soft and sote:
Of spicerie, of leef, of barke, and rote,
Shal ben his sause ymaked by delit
To make him yet a newer appetit.
But certes he, that haunteth swiche delices,
Is ded, while that he liveth in tho vices.
A lecherous thing is wine, and dronkenesse
Is ful of striving and of wretchednesse.
O dronken man, disfigured is thy face,
Sour is thy breth, foul art thou to enbrace:
And thurgh thy dronken nose semeth the soun,
As though thou saidest ay, Sampsoun, Sampsoun:
And yet, God wot, Sampsoun dronk never no wine.
Thou fallest, as it were a stiked swine:
Thy tonge is lost, and all thin honest cure,
For dronkenesse is veray sepulture
Of mannes wit, and his discretion.
In whom that drinke hath domination,
He can no conseil kepe, it is no drede.
Now kepe you fro the white and fro the rede,
And namely fro the white wine of Lepe,
That is to sell in Fishstrete and in Chepe.
This wine of Spaigne crepeth subtilly
In other wines growing faste by,
Of which ther riseth swiche fumositee,
That whan a man hath dronken draughtes three,
And weneth that he be at home in Chepe,
He is in Spaigne, right at the toun of Lepe,
Not at the Rochell, ne at Burdeux toun;
And thanne wol he say, Sampsoun, Sampsoun.
But herkeneth, lordings, o word, I you pray,
That all the soveraine actes, dare I say,
Of victories in the Olde Testament,
Thurgh veray God, that is omnipotent,
Were don in abstinence and in prayere:
Loketh the Bible, and ther ye mow it lere.
Loke Attila, the grete conquerour,
Died in his slepe, with shame and dishonour,
Bleding ay at his nose in dronkenesse:
A capitaine shulde live in sobrenesse.
And over all this, aviseth you right wel,
What was commanded unto Lamuel;
Not Samuel, but Lamuel say I.
Redeth the Bible, and find it expresly
Of wine yeving to hem that have justice.
No more of this, for it may wel suffice.
And now that I have spoke of glotonie,
Now wol I you defenden hasardrie.
Hasard is veray moder of lesinges,
And of deceite, and cursed forsweringes:
Blaspheming of Crist, manslaughter, and wast also
Of catel, and of time; and forthermo
It is repreve, and contrary of honour,
For to ben hold a commun hasardour.
And ever the higher he is of estat,
The more he is holden desolat.
If that a Prince useth hasarderie,
In alle governance and policie
He is, as by commun opinion,
Yhold the lesse in reputation.
Stilbon, that was a wise embassadour,
Was sent to Corinth with ful gret honour

Fro Calidone, to maken hem alliance :
And whan he came, it happed him *par chance*,
That all the gretest that were of that lond
Yplaying atte hasard he hem fond.
For which, as sone as that it mighte be,
He stale him home agein to his contree,
And sayde ther, I wol not lese my name,
Ne wol not take on me so gret defame,
You for to allie unto non hasardours.
Sendeth som other wise embassadours,
For by my trouthe, me were lever die,
Than I you shuld to hasardours allie.
For ye, that ben so glorious in honours,
Shal not allie you to non hasardours,
As by my wille, ne as by my tretee.
This wise philosophre thus sayd he.
Loke eke how to the king Demetrius
The king of Parthes, as the book sayth us,
Sent him a pair of dis of gold in scorne,
For he had used hasard therbeforne :
For which he held his glory and his renoun
At no value or reputatioun.
Lordes may finden other maner play
Honest ynough to drive the day away.
Now wol I speke of others false and grete
A word or two, as olde bookes trete.
Gret swering is a thing abhominable,
And false swering is yet more reprevable.
The highe God forbad swering at al,
Witnesse on Mathew : but in special
Of swering sayth the holy Jeremie,
Thou shalt swere soth thin othes, and not lie ;
And swere in dome, and eke in rightwisnesse ;
But idel swering is a cursednesse.
Behold and see, that in the firste table
Of highe Goddes hestes honourable,
How that the second hest of him is this,
Take not my name in idel or amis.
Lo, rather he forbedeth swiche swering,
Than homicide, or many an other thing.
I say that as by ordre thus it stondeth ;
This knoweth he that his hestes understondeth,
How that the second hest of God is that.
And forthermore, I wol thee tell all plat,
That vengeance shal not parten from his hous
That of his othes is outrageous.
By Goddes precious herte, and by his nailes,
And by the blood of Crist, that is in Hailes,
Seven is my chance, and thin is cink and treye :
By Goddes armes, if thou falsely pleye,
This dagger shal thurghout thin herte go.
This fruit cometh of the bicchel bones two,
Forswering, ire, falsenesse, and homicide.
Now for the love of Crist that for us dide,
Leteth your othes, bothe gret and smale.
But, sires, now wol I tell you forth my tale.
Thise riotoures three, of which I tell,
Long erst or prime rong of any bell,
Were set hem in a taverne for to drinke :
And as they sat, they herd a belle clinke
Beforn a corps, was caried to his grave :
That on of hem gan callen to his knave,
Go bet, quod he, and axe redily,
What corps is this, that passeth here forth by :
And loke that thou report his name wel.
Sire, quod this boy, it nedeth never a del ;
It was me told or ye came here two houres ;
He was parde an old felaw of youres,
And sodenly he was yslain to-night,
Fordronke as he sat on his benche upright,
Ther came a privee theef, men clepen Deth,
That in this contree all the peple sleth,
And with his spere he smote his herte atwo,
And went his way withouten wordes mo.
He hath a thousand slain this pestilence :
And, maister, or ye come in his presence,
Me thinketh that it were ful necessarie,
For to beware of swiche an adversarie :
Beth redy for to mete him evermore.
Thus taughte me my dame, I say no more.
By Seinte Marie, sayd this tavernere,
The child sayth soth, for he hath slain this yere
Hens over a mile, within a gret village,
Both man and woman, child, and hyne, and page,
I trowe his habitation be there :
To ben avised gret wisdome it were,
Or that he did a man a dishonour.
Ye, Goddes armes, quod this riotour,
Is it swiche peril with him for to mete ?
I shal him seke by stile and eke by strete.
I make a vow by Goddes digne bones.
Herkeneth, felawes, we three ben all ones :
Let eche of us hold up his hond to other,
And eche of us becomen others brother,
And we wol slen this false traitour deth :
He shal be slain, he that so many sleth,
By Goddes dignitee, or it be night.
Togeder han thise three hir trouthes plight
To live and dien eche of hem for other,
As though he were his owen boren brother.
And up they stert al dronken in this rage,
And forth they gon towardes that village,
Of which the taverner had spoke beforn,
And many a grisly oth than have they sworn,
And Cristes blessed body they to-rent ;
Deth shal be ded, if that we may him hent.
Whan they han gon not fully half a mile,
Right as they wold han troden over a stile,
An olde man and a poure with hem mette.
This olde man ful mekely hem grette,
And sayde thus ; Now, lordes, God you see.
The proudest of thise riotoures three
Answerd agen ; What ? cherl, with sory grace,
Why art thou all forwrapped save thy face ?
Why livest thou so longe in so gret age ?
This olde man gan loke in his visage,
And sayde thus ; For I ne cannot finde
A man, though that I walked into Inde,
Neither in citee, ne in no village,
That wolde change his youthe for min age ;
And therfore mote I han min age still
As longe time as it is Goddes will.
Ne deth, alas ! ne will not han my lif.
Thus walke I like a resteles caitif,
And on the ground, which is my modres gate,
I knocke with my staf, erlich and late,
And say to hire, Leve mother, let me in.
Lo, how I vanish, flesh, and blood, and skin.
Alas ! whan shul my bones ben at reste ?
Mother, with you wold I changen my cheste,
That in my chambre longe time hath be,
Ye, for an heren clout to wrap in me.
But yet to me she wol not don that grace,
For which ful pale and welked is my face.
But, sires, to you it is no curtesie
To speke unto an olde man vilanie,
But he trespase in word or elles in dede.
In holy writ ye moun yourselven rede ;
Ageins an olde man, hore upon his hede,
Ye shuld arise : therfore I yeve you rede,

Ne doth unto an olde man non harm now,
No more than that ye wold a man did you
In age, if that ye may so long abide.
And God be with you, wher ye go or ride.
I moste go thider as I have to go.
Nay, olde cherl, by God thou shalt not so,
Sayde this other hasardour anon;
Thou partest not so lightly by Seint John.
Thou spake right now of thilke traitour deth,
That in this contree all our frendes sleth;
Have here my trouth as thou art his espie;
Tell wher he is, or thou shalt it abie,
By God and by the holy Sacrement;
For sothly thou art on of his assent
To slen us yonge folk, thou false thefe.
Now, sires, quod he, if it be you so lefe
To finden deth, tourne up this croked way,
For in that grove I left him by my fay
Under a tree, and ther he wol abide;
Ne for your bost he wol him nothing hide.
Se ye that oke? right ther ye shuln him find.
God save you, that bought agen mankind,
And you amende; thus sayd this olde man.
And everich of thise riotoures ran,
Til they came to the tree, and ther they found
Of Floreins fine of gold ycoined round,
Wel nigh an eighte bushels, as hem thought.
No lenger as than after dethe they sought,
But eche of hem so glad was of the sight,
For that the floreins ben so faire and bright,
That doun they sette hem by the precious hord.
The werste of hem he spake the firste word.
Brethren, quod he, take kepe what I shal say;
My wit is gret, though that I bourde and play.
This tresour hath fortune unto us yeven
In mirth and jolitee our lif to liven,
And lightly as it cometh, so wol we spend.
Ey, Goddes precious dignitee, who wend
To-day, that we shuld han so faire a grace?
But might this gold be caried fro this place
Home to myn hous, or elles unto youres,
(For wel I wote that all this gold is oures)
Thanne were we in high felicitee.
But trewely by day it may not be;
Men wolden say that we were theeves strong,
And for our owen tresour don us hong.
This tresour must ycaried be by night
As wisely and as sleighly as it might.
Wherfore I rede, that cut among us alle
We drawe, and let see wher the cut wol falle:
And he that hath the cut, with herte blith,
Shal rennen to the toun, and that ful swith,
And bring us bred and win ful prively:
And two of us shal kepen subtilly
This tresour wel: and if he wol not tarien,
Whan it is night, we wol this tresour carien
By on assent, wher as us thinketh best.
That on of hem the cut brought in his fest,
And bad hem drawe and loke wher it wold falle,
And it fell on the yongest of hem alle:
And forth toward the toun he went anon.
And al so sone as that he was agon,
That on of hem spake thus unto that other;
Thou wotest wel thou art my sworen brother,
Thy profite wol I tell thee right anon.
Thou wost wel that our felaw is agon,
And here is gold, and that ful gret plentee,
That shal departed ben among us three.
But natheles, if I can shape it so,
That it departed were among us two,
Had I not don a frendes turn to thee?
That other answerd, I n'ot how that may be:
He wote wel that the gold is with us tweye.
What shuln we don? what shuln we to him seye?
Shal it be conseil? sayd the firste shrewe;
And I shal tellen thee in wordes fewe
What we shul don, and bring it wel aboute.
I grante, quod that other, out of doute,
That by my trouth I wol thee not bewreie.
Now, quod the first, thou wost wel we ben twele,
And tweie of us shul strenger be than on.
Loke, whan that he is set, thou right anon
Arise, as though thou woldest with him play;
And I shal rive him thurgh the sides tway,
While that thou stroglest with him as in game,
And with thy dagger loke thou do the same;
And than shal all this gold departed be,
My dere frend, betwixen thee and me:
Than moun we bothe our lustes al fulfille,
And play at dis right at our owen wille.
And thus accorded ben thise shrewes tweye,
To slen the thridde, as ye han herd me seye.
This yongest, which that wente to the toun,
Ful oft in herte he rolleth up and doun
The beautee of thise floreins newe and bright.
O Lord, quod he, if so were that I might
Have all this tresour to myself alone,
Ther n'is no man that liveth under the trone
Of God, that shulde live so mery as I.
And at the last the fend our enemy
Putte in his thought, that he shuld poison beye,
With which he mighte slen his felaws tweye.
For why, the fend fond him in swiche living,
That he had leve to sorwe him to bring.
For this was outrely his ful entente
To slen hem both, and never to repente.
And forth he goth, no lenger wold he tary,
Into the toun unto a Potecary,
And praied him that he him wolde sell
Som poison, that he might his ratouns quell.
And eke ther was a polkat in his hawe,
That, as he sayd, his capons had yslawe:
And fayn he wolde him wreken, if he might,
Of vermine, that destroied hem by night.
The Potecary answerd, Thou shalt have
A thing, as wisly God my soule save,
In all this world ther n'is no creature,
That ete or dronke hath of this confecture,
Not but the mountance of a corne of whete,
That he ne shal his lif anon forlete;
Ye, sterve he shal, and that in lesse while,
Than thou wolt gon a pas not but a mile:
This poison is so strong and violent.
This cursed man hath in his hond yhent
This poison in a box, and swithe he ran
Into the nexte strete unto a man,
And borwed of him large botelles three;
And in the two the poison poured he;
The thridde he kepte clene for his drinke,
For all the night he shope him for to swinke
In carying of the gold out of that place.
And whan this riotour, with sory grace,
Hath filled with win his grete botelles three,
To his felawes agen repaireth he.
What nedeth it therof to sermon more?
For right as they had cast his deth before,
Right so they han him slain, and that anon.
And whan that this was don, thus spake that on;
Now let us sit and drinke, and make us mery,
And afterward we wiln his body bery.

And with that word it happed him *par cas*,
To take the botelle, ther the poison was,
And dronke, and yave his felaw drinke also,
For which anon they storve bothe two.
But certes I suppose that Avicenne
Wrote never in no canon, ne in no fenne,
Mo wonder signes of empoisoning,
Than had thise wretches two or hir ending.
Thus ended ben thise homicides two,
And eke the false empoisoner also.
O cursednesse of alle cursednesse!
O traitours homicide! O wickednesse!
O glotonie, luxurie, and hasardrie!
Thou blasphemour of Crist with vilanie,
And othes grete, of usage and of pride!
Alas! mankinde, how may it betide,
That to thy Creatour, which that thee wrought,
And with his precious herte-blood thee bought,
Thou art so false and so unkind, alas!
Now, good men, God foryeve you your trespas,
And ware you fro the sinne of avarice.
Min holy pardon may you all warice,
So that ye offre nobles or starlinges,
Or elles silver broches, spones, ringes.
Boweth your hed under this holy Bulle.
Cometh up, ye wives, and offreth of your wolle;
Your names I entre here in my roll anon;
Into the blisse of heven shul ye gon:
I you assoile by min high powere,
You that wiln offre, as clene and eke as clere
As ye were borne. Lo, sires, thus I preche;
And Jesu Crist, that is our soules leche,
So graunte you his pardon to receive;
For that is best, I wol you not deceive.
But, sires, o word forgate I in my tale;
I have relikes and pardon in my male,
As faire as any man in Englelond,
Which were me yeven by the Popes hond.
If any of you wol of devotion
Offren, and han min absolution,
Cometh forth anon, and kneleth here adoun,
And mekely receiveth my pardoun.
Or elles taketh pardon, as ye wende,
Al newe and freshe at every tounes ende,
So that ye offren alway newe and newe,
Nobles or pens, which that ben good and trewe.
It is an honour to everich that is here,
That ye moun have a suffisant pardonere
To assoilen you in contree as ye ride,
For aventures, which that moun betide.
Paraventure ther may falle on, or two,
Doun of his hors, and breke his necke atwo.
Loke, which a seurtee is it to you alle,
That I am in your felawship yfalle,
That may assoile you bothe more and lasse,
Whan that the soule shal fro the body passe.
I rede that our hoste shal beginne,
For he is most envoluped in sinne.
Come forth, sire hoste, and offre first anon,
And thou shalt kisse the relikes everich on,
Ye for a grote; unbokel anon thy purse.
Nay nay, quod he, than have I Cristes curse.
Let be, quod he, it shal not be, so the ich.
Thou woldest make me kisse thin olde brech,
And swere it were a relike of a seint,
Though it were with thy foundement depeint.
But by the crois, which that Seint Heleine fond,
I wolde I had thin coilons in min hond,
Instede of relikes, or of seintuarie.
Let cut hem of, I wol thee help hem carie;
They shul be shrined in an hogges tord.
This Pardoner answered not a word;
So wroth he was, no word ne wolde he say.
Now, quod our hoste, I wol no lenger play
With thee, ne with non other angry man.
But right anon the worthy knight began,
(Whan that he saw that all the peple lough)
No more of this, for it is right ynough.
Sire Pardoner, be mery and glad of chere;
And ye, sire hoste, that ben to me so dere,
I pray you that ye kisse the Pardoner;
And, Pardoner, I pray thee draw thee ner,
And as we diden, let us laugh and play.
Anon they kissed, and riden forth hir way.

THE SHIPMANNES TALE.

THE SHIPMANNES PROLOGUE.

Our hoste upon his stirrops stode anon,
And saide; Good men, herkeneth everich on,
This was a thrifty tale for the nones.
Sire parish preest, quod he, for Goddes bones,
Tell us a tale, as was thy forward yore:
I see wel that ye lerned men in lore
Can mochel good, by Goddes dignitee.
The Person him answerd, *Benedicite!*
What eileth the man, so sinfully to swere?
Our hoste answerd, O Jankin, be ye there?
Now, good men, quod our hoste, herkneth to me.
I smell a loller in the wind, quod he.
Abideth for Goddes digne passion,
For we shul han a predication:
This loller here wol prechen us somwhat.
Nay by my father's soule, that shal he nat,
Sayde the Shipman, here shal he nat preche,
He shal no gospel glosen here ne teche.
We leven all in the gret God, quod he.
He wolde sowen som difficultee,
Or springen cockle in our clene corne.
And therfore, hoste, I warne thee beforne,
My joly body shal a tale telle,
And I shal clinken you so mery a belle,
That I shal waken all this compagnie:
But it shal not ben of philosophie,
Ne of physike, ne termes queinte of lawe;
Ther is but litel Latin in my mawe.

THE SHIPMANNES TALE.

A Marchant whilom dwelled at Seint Denise,
That riche was, for which men held him wise.
A wif he had of excellent beautee,
And compaignable, and revelous was she,

Which is a thing that causeth more dispence,
Than worth is all the chere and reverence,
That men hem don at festes and at dances.
Swiche salutations and contenances
Passen, as doth a shadwe upon the wall:
But wo is him that payen mote for all.
The sely husbond algate he mote pay,
He mote us clothe and he mote us array
All for his owen worship richely:
In which array we dancen jolily.
And if that he may not paraventure,
Or elles lust not swiche dispence endure,
But thinketh it is wasted and ylost,
Than mote another payen for our cost,
Or lene us gold, and that is perilous.
This noble Marchant held a worthy hous,
For which he had all day so gret repaire
For his largesse, and for his wif was faire,
That wonder is: but herkeneth to my tale.
Amonges all thise gestes gret and smale,
Ther was a Monk, a faire man and a bold,
I trow a thritty winter he was old,
That ever in on was drawing to that place.
This yonge Monk, that was so faire of face,
Acquainted was so with this goode man,
Sithen that hir firste knowlege began,
That in his hous as familier was he,
As it possible is any frend to be.
And for as mochel as this goode man
And eke this Monk, of which that I began,
Were bothe two yborne in o village,
The Monk him claimeth, as for cosinage,
And he again him sayd not ones nay,
But was as glad therof, as foule of day;
For to his herte it was a gret plesance.
Thus ben they knit with eterne alliance,
And eche of hem gan other for to ensure
Of brotherhed, while that hire lif may dure.
Free was Dan John, and namely of dispence
As in that hous, and ful of diligence
To don plesance, and also gret costage:
He not forgate to yeve the leste page
In all that hous; but, after hir degree,
He yave the lord, and sithen his meinee,
Whan that he came, som maner honest thing;
For which they were as glad of his coming
As foule is fayn, whan that the sonne up riseth.
No more of this as now, for it sufficeth.
But so befell, this Marchant on a day
Shope him to maken redy his array
Toward the toun of Brugges for to fare,
To byen ther a portion of ware:
For which he hath to Paris sent anon
A messager, and praied hath Dan John
That he shuld come to Seint Denis, and pleie
With him, and with his wif, a day or tweie,
Or he to Brugges went, in alle wise.
This noble Monk, of which I you devise,
Hath of his Abbot, as him list, licence,
(Because he was a man of high prudence,
And eke an officer out for to ride,
To seen hir granges, and hir bernes wide)
And unto Seint Denis he cometh anon.
Who was so welcome as my lord Dan John,
Our dere cousin, ful of curtesie?
With him he brought a jubbe of Malvesie,
And eke another ful of fine Vernage,
And volatile, as ay was his usage:
And thus I let hem ete, and drinke, and pleye,
This marchant and this monk, a day or tweye.

The thridde day this marchant up ariseth,
And on his nedes sadly him aviseth:
And up into his countour hous goth he,
To reken with himselven, wel may be,
Of thilke yere, how that it with him stood,
And how that he dispended had his good,
And if that he encresed were or non.
His bookes and his bagges many on
He layth beforn him on his counting bord.
Ful riche was his tresour and his hord;
For which ful fast his countour dore he shet;
And eke he n'olde no man shuld him let
Of his accountes, for the mene time:
And thus he sit, til it was passed prime.
Dan John was risen in the morwe also,
And in the gardin walketh to and fro,
And hath his thinges sayd ful curteisly.
This goode wif came walking prively
Into the gardin, ther he walketh soft,
And him salueth, as she hath don oft:
A maiden child came in hire compagnie,
Which as hire lust she may governe and gie,
For yet under the yerde was the maide.
O dere cosin min Dan John, she saide,
What aileth you so rathe for to arise?
Nece, quod he, it ought ynough suffise
Five houres for to slepe upon a night:
But it were for an olde appalled wight,
As ben thise wedded men, that lie and dare,
As in a fourme sitteth a wery hare,
Were al forstraught with houndes gret and smale.
But, dere nece, why be ye so pale?
I trowe certes, that our goode man
Hath you laboured, sith this night began,
That you were nede to resten hastily.
And with that word he lough ful merily,
And of his owen thought he wexe all red.
This faire wif gan for to shake hire hed,
And saied thus; Ye, God wote all, quod she.
Nay, cosin min, it stant not so with me.
For by that God, that yave me soule and lif,
In all the reame of Fraunce is ther no wif,
That lasse lust hath to that sory play;
For I may singe alas and wala wa
That I was borne, but to no wight (quod she)
Dare I not tell how that it stant with me.
Wherfore I thinke out of this lond to wende,
Or elles of myself to make an ende,
So ful am I of drede and eke of care.
This monk began upon this wif to stare,
And sayd, Alas! my nece, God forbede,
That ye for any sorwe, or any drede,
Fordo yourself: but telleth me your grefe,
Paraventure I may in your mischefe
Conseile or helpe: and therfore telleth me
All your annoy, for it shal ben secree.
For on my Portos here I make an oth,
That never in my lif, for lefe ne loth,
Ne shal I of no conseil you bewray.
The same agen to you, quod she, I say.
By God and by this Portos I you swere,
Though men me wolden all in peces tere,
Ne shal I never, for to gon to helle,
Bewrey o word of thing that ye me tell,
Nought for no cosinage, ne alliance,
But verayly for love and affiance.
Thus ben they sworne, and hereupon they kiste,
And eche of hem told other what hem liste.
Cosin, quod she, if that I had a space,
As I have non, and namely in this place,

Than wold I tell a legend of my lif,
What I have suffred sith I was a wif
With min husbond, al be he your cosin.
Nay, quod this monk, by God and Seint Martin,
He n'is no more cosin unto me,
Than is the leef that hangeth on the tree:
I clepe him so by Seint Denis of France
To han the more cause of acquaintance
Of you, which I have loved specially
Aboven alle women sikerly,
This swere I you on my professioun:
Telleth your grefe, lest that he come adoun,
And hasteth you, and goth away anon.
My dere love, quod she, o my Dan John,
Ful lefe were me this conseil for to hide,
But out it mote, I may no lenger abide.
Myn husbond is to me the werste man,
That ever was sith that the world began:
But sith I am a wif, it sit not me
To tellen no wight of our privetee,
Neither in bed, ne in non other place;
God shilde I shulde it tellen for his grace;
A wif ne shal not sayn of hire husbond
But all honour, as I can understond;
Save unto you thus moch I tellen shal:
As helpe me God, he is nought worth at all,
In no degree, the value of a flie.
But yet me greveth most his nigardie:
And wel ye wot, that women naturally
Desiren thinges sixe, as wel as I.
They wolden that hir husbondes shulden be
Hardy, and wise, and riche, and therto free,
And buxome to his wif, and fresh a-bedde.
But by that ilke Lord that for us bledde,
For his honour myselven for to array,
A sonday next I muste nedes pay
An hundred franks, or elles am I lorne.
Yet were me lever that I were unborne,
Than me were don a sclandre or vilanie.
And if min husbond eke might it espie,
I n'ere but lost; and therfore I you prey
Lene me this summe, or elles mote I dey.
Dan John, I say, lene me this hundred frankes;
Parde I wol not faille you my thankes,
If that you list to do that I you pray.
For at a certain day I wol you pay,
And do to you what plesance and service
That I may don, right as you list devise:
And but I do, God take on me vengeance,
As foule as ever had Genelon of France.
This gentil monk answerd in this manere;
Now trewely, min owen lady dere,
I have (quod he) on you so grete a routhe,
That I you swere, and plighte you my trouthe,
That whan your husbond is to Flandres fare,
I wol deliver you out of this care,
For I wol bringen you an hundred frankes.
And with that word he caught hire by the flankes,
And hire embraced hard, and kiste hire oft.
Goth now your way, quod he, al stille and soft,
And let us dine as sone as that ye may,
For by my kalender it is prime of day:
Goth now, and beth as trewe as I shal be.
Now elles God forbede, sire, quod she;
And forth she goth, as joly as a pie,
And bad the cokes that they shuld hem hie,
So that men mighten dine, and that anon.
Up to hire husbond is this wif ygon,
And knocketh at his countour boldely.
Qui est la? quod he. Peter, it am I,
Quod she. What, sire, how longe wol ye fast?
How longe time wol ye reken and cast
Your summes, and your bookes, and your thinges?
The devil have part of all swiche rekeninges.
Ye han ynough parde of Goddes sonde.
Come doun to-day, and let your bagges stonde.
Ne be ye not ashamed, that Dan John
Shal fasting all this day elenge gon?
What? let us here a masse, and go we dine.
Wif, quod this man, litel canst thou divine
The curious besinesse that we have:
For of us chapmen, all so God me save,
And by that lord that cleped is Seint Ive,
Scarsly amonges twenty ten shul thrive
Continuelly, lasting unto oure age.
We moun wel maken chere and good visage,
And driven forth the world as it may be,
And kepen oure estat in privitee,
Til we be ded, or elles that we play
A pilgrimage, or gon out of the way.
And therfore have I gret necessitee
Upon this queinte world to avisen me.
For evermore mote we stond in drede
Of hap and fortune in our chapmanhede.
To Flandres wol I go to-morwe at day,
And come agein as sone as ever I may:
For which, my dere wif, I thee beseke
As be to every wight buxom and meke,
And for to kepe our good be curious,
And honestly governe wel our hous.
Thou hast ynough, in every maner wise,
That to a thrifty houshold may suffice.
Thee lacketh non array, ne no vitaille;
Of silver in thy purse shalt thou not faille.
And with that word his countour dore he shette,
And doun he goth; no lenger wold he lette;
And hastily a masse was ther saide,
And spedily the tables were ylaide,
And to the diner faste they hem spedde,
And richely this monk the chapman fedde.
And after diner Dan John sobrely
This chapman toke apart, and prively
He said him thus; Cosin, it stondeth so,
That, wel I see, to Brugges ye wol go,
God and Seint Austin spede you and gide.
I pray you, cosin, wisely that ye ride;
Governeth you also of your diete
Attemprely, and namely in this hete.
Betwix us two nedeth no strange fare;
Farewel, cosin, God shilde you fro care.
If any thing ther be by day or night,
If it lie in my power and my might,
That ye me wol command in any wise,
It shal be don, right as ye wol devise.
But o thing or ye go, if it may be,
I wolde prayen you for to lene me
An hundred frankes for a weke or tweye,
For certain bestes that I muste beye,
To storen with a place that is oures:
(God helpe me so, I wold that it were youres)
I shal not faille surely of my day,
Not for a thousand frankes, a mile way.
But let this thing be secree, I you preye;
For yet to-night thise bestes mote I beye.
And fare now wel, min owen cosin dere,
Grand mercy of your cost and of your chere.
This noble marchant gentilly anon
Answerd and said, O cosin min Dan John,
Now sikerly this is a smal requeste:
My gold is youres, whan that it you leste,

And not only my gold, but my chaffare :
Take what you lest, God shilde that ye spare.
But o thing is, ye know it wel ynough
Of chapmen, that hir money is hir plough.
We moun creancen while we han a name,
But goodles for to ben it is no game.
Pay it agen, whan it lith in your ese ;
After my might ful fayn wold I you plese.
Thise hundred frankes fet he forth anon,
And prively he toke hem to Dan John :
No wight in al this world wist of this lone,
Saving this marchant, and Dan John alone.
They drinke, and speke, and rome a while and pleye,
Til that Dan John rideth to his abbeye.
The morwe came, and forth this marchant rideth
To Flandres ward, his prentis wel him gideth,
Til he came in to Brugges merily.
Now goth this marchant faste and besily
About his nede, and bieth, and creanceth ;
He neither playeth at the dis, ne danceth ;
But as a marchant, shortly for to tell,
He ledeth his lif, and ther I let him dwell.
The sonday next the marchant was agon,
To Seint Denis yeomen is Dan John,
With croune and berde all fresh and newe yshave.
In all the hous ther n'as so litel a knave,
Ne no wight elles, that he n'as ful fain,
For that my lord Dan John was come again.
And shortly to the point right for to gon,
This faire wif accordeth with Dan John,
That for thise hundred frankes he shuld all night
Haven hire in his armes bolt-upright :
And this accord parformed was in dede.
In mirth all night a besy lif they lede
Til it was day, that Dan John yede his way,
And bad the meinie farewel, have good day.
For non of hem, ne no wight in the toun,
Hath of Dan John right non suspectioun ;
And forth he rideth home to his abbey,
Or wher him liste, no more of him I sey.
This marchant, whan that ended was the faire,
To Seint Denis he gan for to repaire,
And with his wif he maketh feste and chere,
And telleth hire that chaffare is so dere,
That nedes muste he make a chevisance,
For he was bonde in a recognisance,
To payen twenty thousand sheldes anon.
For which this marchant is to Paris gon
To borwe of certain frendes that he hadde
A certain frankes, and som with him he ladde.
And whan that he was come in to the toun,
For gret chiertee and gret affectioun
Unto Dan John he goth him first to pleye ;
Not for to axe or borwe of him moneye,
But for to wete and seen of his welfare,
And for to tellen him of his chaffare,
As frendes don, whan they ben mette in fere.
Dan John him maketh feste and mery chere ;
And he him tolde agen ful specially,
How he had wel ybought and graciously
(Thanked be God) all hole his marchandise :
Save that he must in alle manere wise
Maken a chevisance, as for his beste :
And than he shulde ben in joye and reste.
Dan John answered, Certes I am fain,
That ye in hele be comen home again :
And if that I were riche, as have I blisse,
Of twenty thousand sheldes shuld ye not misse,
For ye so kindely this other day
Lente me gold, and as I can and may
I thanke you, by God and by Seint Jame.
But natheles I toke unto our Dame,
Your wif at home, the same gold again
Upon your benche, she wote it wel certain,
By certain tokenes that I can hire tell.
Now by your leve, I may no lenger dwell ;
Our abbot wol out of this toun anon,
And in his compagnie I muste gon.
Grete wel our dame, min owen nece swete,
And farewel, dere cosin, til we mete.
This marchant, which that was ful ware and wise,
Creanced hath, and paide eke in Paris
To certain Lumbardes redy in hir hond
The summe of gold, and gate of hem his bond,
And home he goth, mery as a popingay.
For wel he knew he stood in swiche array,
That nedes muste he winne in that viage
A thousand frankes, above all his costage.
His wif ful redy mette him at the gate,
As she was wont of old usage algate :
And all that night in mirthe they ben sette,
For he was riche, and clerely out of dette.
Whan it was day, this marchant gan enbrace
His wif all newe, and kiste hire in hire face,
And up he goth, and maketh it ful tough.
No more, quod she, by God ye have ynough :
And wantonly agen with him she plaide,
Til at the last this marchant to hire saide.
By God, quod he, I am a litel wrothe
With you, my wif, although it be me lothe :
And wote ye why ? by God, as that I gesse,
That ye han made a manere strangenesse
Betwixen me and my cosin Dan John.
Ye shuld have warned me, or I had gon,
That he you had an hundred frankes paide
By redy token : and held him evil apaide,
For that I to him spake of chevisance :
(Me semed so as by his contenance)
But natheles by God our heven king,
I thoughte not to axe of him no thing.
I pray thee, wif, ne do thou no more so.
Tell me alway, er that I fro thee go,
If any dettour hath in min absence
Ypaide thee, lest thurgh thy negligence
I might him axe a thing that he hath paide.
This wif was not aferde ne affraide,
But boldely she saide, and that anon ;
Mary I defie that false monk Dan John,
I kepe not of his tokenes never a del :
He toke me certain gold, I wote it wel.
What ? evil thedome on his monkes snoute !
For, God it wote, I wend withouten doute,
That he had yeve it me, because of you,
To don therwith min honour and my prow,
For cosinage, and eke for *belle chere*,
That he hath had ful often times here.
But sith I see I stonde in swiche disjoint,
I wol answere you shortly to the point.
Ye have mo slakke dettours than am I :
For I wol pay you wel and redily
Fro day to day, and if so be I faille,
I am your wif, score it upon my taile,
And I shal pay as sone as ever I may.
For by my trouth, I have on min array,
And not in waste, bestowed it every del.
And for I have bestowed it so wel
For your honour, for Goddes sake I say,
As beth not wrothe, but let us laugh and play.
Ye shal my joly body han to wedde :
By God I n'ill not pay you but a-bedde :

Foryeve it me, min owen spouse dere ;
Turne hitherward and maketh better chere.
This marchant saw ther was no remedy :
And for to chide, it n'ere but a foly,
Sith that the thing may not amended be.

Now, wif, he said, and I foryeve it thee ;
But by thy lif ne be no more so large ;
Kepe bet my good, this yeve I thee in charge.
Thus endeth now my tale, and God us sende
Taling ynough, unto our lives ende.

THE PRIORESSES TALE.

THE PRIORESSES PROLOGUE.

Wel said by *corpus Domini*, quod our Hoste,
Now longe mote thou sailen by the coste,
Thou gentil Maister, gentil Marinere.
God give the monke a thousand last quad yere.
A ha, felawes, beth ware of swiche a jape.
The monke put in the mannes hode an ape,
And in his wifes eke, by Seint Austin.
Draweth no monkes more into your in.
But now passe over, and let us seke aboute,
Who shal now tellen first of all this route
Another tale : and with that word he said,
As curteisly as it had ben a maid,
My lady Prioresse, by your leve,
So that I wist I shuld you not agreve,
I wolde demen, that ye tellen shold
A tale next, if so were that ye wold.
Now wol ye vouchesauf, my lady dere ?
Gladly, quod she, and saide as ye shul here.

THE PRIORESSES TALE.

O Lord our lord, thy name how merveillous
Is in this large world ysprad ! (quod she)
For not al only thy laude precious
Parfourmed is by men of dignitee,
But by the mouth of children thy bountee
Parfourmed is, for on the brest souking
Somtime shewen they thin herying.

Wherfore in laude, as I can best and may,
Of thee and of the white lily flour,
Which that thee bare, and is a maide alway,
To tell a storie I wol do my labour ;
Not that I may encresen hire honour,
For she hireselven is honour and rote
Of bountee, next hire sone, and soules bote.

O mother maide, o maide and mother fre,
O bushe unbrent, brenning in Moyses sight,
That ravishedest doun fro the deitee,
Thurgh thin humblesse, the gost that in thee alight :
Of whos vertue, whan he thin herte light,
Conceived was the fathers sapience :
Helpe me to tell it in thy reverence.

Lady, thy bountee, thy magnificence,
Thy vertue and thy gret humilitee,
Ther may no tonge expresse in no science :
For somtime, lady, or men pray to thee,
Thou gost beforn of thy benignitee,
And getest us the light, of thy prayere,
To giden us unto thy sone so dere.

My conning is so weke, o blisful quene,
For to declare thy grete worthinesse,
That I ne may the weighte not sustene ;
But as a child of twelf moneth old or lesse,
That can unnethes any word expresse,
Right so fare I, and therfore I you pray,
Gideth my song, that I shal of you say.

Ther was in Asie, in a gret citee,
Amonges Cristen folk a Jewerie,
Sustened by a lord of that contree,
For foule usure, and lucre of vilanie,
Hateful to Crist, and to his compagnie :
And thurgh the strete men mighten ride and wende
For it was free, and open at eyther ende.

A litel scole of Cristen folk ther stood
Doun at the ferther ende, in which ther were
Children an hepe comen of Cristen blood,
That lerned in that scole yere by yere,
Swiche manere doctrine as men used there :
This is to say, to singen and to rede,
As smale children don in hir childhede.

Among thise children was a widewes sone,
A litel clergion, sevene yere of age,
That day by day to scole was his wone,
And eke also, wheras he sey the image
Of Cristes moder, had he in usage,
As him was taught, to knele adoun, and say
Ave Marie, as he goth by the way.

Thus hath this widewe hire litel sone ytaught
Our blisful Lady, Cristes moder dere,
To worship ay, and he forgate it naught :
For sely childe wol alway sone lere.
But ay, whan I remembre on this matere,
Seint Nicholas stant ever in my presence,
For he so yong to Crist did reverence.

This litel childe his litel book lerning,
As he sate in the scole at his primere,
He *Alma redemptoris* herde sing,
As children lered hir antiphonere :
And as he dorst, he drow him nere and nere,
And herkened ay the wordes and the note,
Til he the firste vers coude al by rote.

Nought wist he what this Latin was to say,
For he so yonge and tendre was of age ;
But on a day his felaw gan he pray
To expounden him this song in his langage,
Or telle him why this song was in usage :
This prayde he him to construe and declare,
Ful often time upon his knees bare.

His felaw, which that elder was than he,
Answerd him thus: This song, I have herd say,
Was maked of our blisful Lady fre,
Hire to salue, and eke hire for to prey
To ben our help, and socour whan we dey.
I can no more expound in this matere:
I lerne song, I can but smal grammere.

And is this song maked in reverence
Of Cristes moder? said this innocent;
Now certes I wol don my diligence
To conne it all, or Cristemasse be went,
Though that I for my primer shal be shent,
And shal be beten thries in an houre,
I wol it conne, our Ladie for to honoure.

His felaw taught him homeward prively
Fro day to day, til he coude it by rote,
And than he song it wel and boldely
Fro word to word according with the note:
Twies a day it passed thurgh his throte,
To scoleward and homeward whan he wente:
On Cristes moder set was his entente.

As I have said, thurghout the Jewerie
This litel child as he came to and fro,
Ful merily than wold he sing and crie,
O Alma redemptoris, ever mo:
The swetenesse hath his herte persed so
Of Cristes moder, that to hire to pray
He cannot stint of singing by the way.

Our firste fo, the serpent Sathanas,
That hath in Jewes herte his waspes nest,
Up swale and said, O Ebraike peple, alas!
Is this to you a thing that is honest,
That swiche a boy shal walken as him leste
In your despit, and sing of swiche sentence,
Which is again our lawes reverence?

From thennesforth the Jewes han conspired
This innocent out of this world to chace:
An homicide therto han they hired,
That in an aleye had a privee place,
And as the child gan forthby for to pace,
This cursed Jew him hent, and held him fast,
And cut his throte, and in a pit him cast.

I say that in a wardrope they him threwe,
Wher as thise Jewes purgen hir entraille.
O cursed folk, of Herodes alle newe,
What may your evil entente you availle?
Mordre wol out, certein it wol not faille,
And namely ther the honour of God shal sprede:
The blood out crieth on your cursed dede.

O martyr souded in virginitee,
Now maist thou singe, and folwen ever in on
The white lamb celestial, quod she,
Of which the gret Evangelist Seint John
In Pathmos wrote, which sayth that they that gon
Beforn this lamb, and singe a song al newe,
That never fleshly woman they ne knewe.

This poure widewe awaiteth al that night
After hire litel childe, and he came nought:
For which as sone as it was dayes light,
With face pale of drede and besy thought,
She hath at scole and elleswher him sought,
Til finally she gan so fer aspie,
That he last seen was in the Jewerie.

With modres pitee in hire brest enclosed
She goth, as she were half out of hire minde,
To every place, wher she hath supposed
By likelihed hire litel child to finde:
And ever on Cristes moder meke and kinde
She cried, and at the laste thus she wrought,
Among the cursed Jewes she him sought.

She freyneth, and she praieth pitously
To every Jew that dwelled in thilke place,
To telle hire, if hire child went ought forthby:
They sayden, Nay; but Jesu of his grace
Yave in hire thought, within a litel space,
That in that place after hire sone she cride,
Ther he was casten in a pit beside.

O grete God, that parformest thy laude
By mouth of innocentes, lo here thy might!
This gemme of chastitee, this emeraude,
And eke of martirdome the rubie bright,
Ther he with throte ycorven lay upright,
He *Alma redemptoris* gan to singe
So loude, that all the place gan to ringe.

The Cristen folk, that thurgh the strete wente,
In comen, for to wondre upon this thing:
And hastifly they for the provost sente.
He came anon withouten tarying,
And herieth Crist, that is of heven king,
And eke his moder, honour of mankind,
And after that the Jewes let he binde.

This child with pitous lamentation
Was taken up, singing his song alway:
And with honour and gret procession,
They carien him unto the next abbey.
His moder swouning by the bere lay;
Unnethes might the peple that was there
This newe Rachel bringen fro his bere.

With turment, and with shameful deth eche on
This provost doth thise Jewes for to sterve,
That of this morder wiste, and that anon;
He n'olde no swiche cursednesse observe:
Evil shal he have, that evil wol deserve.
Therfore with wilde hors he did hem drawe,
And after that he heng hem by the lawe.

Upon his bere ay lith this innocent
Beforn the auter while the masse last:
And after that, the abbot with his covent
Han spedde hem for to berie him ful fast:
And whan they holy water on him cast,
Yet spake this child, whan spreint was the holy water
And sang, *o Alma redemptoris mater.*

This abbot, which that was an holy man,
As monkes ben, or elles ought to be,
This yonge child to conjure he began,
And said; O dere child, I halse thee
In vertue of the holy Trinitee,
Tell me what is thy cause for to sing,
Sith that thy throte is cut to my seming.

My throte is cut unto my nekke-bon,
Saide this child, and as by way of kinde
I shuld have deyd, ye longe time agon:
But Jesu Crist, as ye in bookes finde,
Wol that his glory last and be in minde,
And for the worship of his moder dere,
Yet may I sing *o Alma* loude and clere.

This welle of mercie, Cristes moder swete,
I loved alway, as after my conning:
And whan that I my lif shulde forlete,
To me she came, and bad me for to sing
This antem verally in my dying,
As ye han herde, and, whan that I had songe,
Me thought she laid a grain upon my tonge.

Wherfore I sing, and sing I mote certain
In honour of that blisful maiden free,
Til fro my tonge of taken is the grain.
And after that thus saide she to me;
My litel child, than wol I fetchen thee,
Whan that the grain is fro thy tong ytake:
Be not agaste, I wol thee not forsake.

This holy monk, this abbot him mene I,
His tonge out caught, and toke away the grain;
And he yave up the gost ful softely.
And whan this abbot had this wonder sein,
His salte teres trilled adoun as reyne:
And groff he fell al platte upon the ground,
And still he lay, as he had ben ybound.

The covent lay eke upon the pavement
Weping and herying Cristes moder dere.
And after that they risen, and forth ben went,
And toke away this martir fro his bere,
And in a tombe of marble stones clere
Enclosen they his litel body swete:
Ther he is now, God lene us for to mete.

O yonge Hew of Lincoln, slain also
With cursed Jewes, as it is notable,
For it n'is but a litel while ago,
Pray eke for us, we sinful folk unstable,
That of his mercy God so merciable
On us his grete mercie multiplie,
For reverence of his moder Marie.

THE RIME OF SIRE THOPAS.

PROLOGUE TO SIRE THOPAS.

Whan said was this miracle, every man
As sober was, that wonder was to see,
Til that our hoste to japen he began,
And than at erst he loked upon me,
And saide thus; What man art thou? quod he.
Thou lokest, as thou woldest finde an hare,
For ever upon the ground I see thee stare.

Approche nere, and loke up merily.
Now ware you, sires, and let this man have place.
He in the waste is shapen as wel as I:
This were a popet in an arme to enbrace
For any woman, smal and faire of face.
He semeth elvish by his contenance,
For unto no wight doth he daliance.

Say now somwhat, sin other folk han saide;
Tell us a tale of mirthe and that anon.
Hoste, quod I, ne be not evil apaide,
For other tale certes can I non,
But of a rime I lerned yore agon.
Ye, that is good, quod he, we shullen here
Som deintee thing, me thinketh by thy chere.

THE RIME OF SIRE THOPAS.

Listeneth, lordinges, in good entent,
And I wol tell you *verament*
Of mirthe and of solas,
Al of a knight was faire and gent
In bataille and in turnament,
His name was sire Thopas.

Yborne he was in fer contree,
In Flandres, al beyonde the sec,
At Popering in the place,
His father was a man ful free,
And lord he was of that contree,
As it was Goddes grace.

Sire Thopas was a doughty swain,
White was his face as paindemaine
His lippes red as rose.
His rudde is like scarlet in grain,
And I you tell in good certain
He had a semely nose.

His here, his berde, was like safroun,
That to his girdle raught adoun,
His shoon of cordewane;
Of Brugges were his hosen broun;
His robe was of ciclatoun,
That coste many a jane.

He coude hunt at the wilde dere,
And ride on hauking for the rivere
With grey goshauk on honde:
Therto he was a good archere,
Of wrastling was ther non his pere,
Ther ony ram shuld stonde.

Ful many a maide bright in bour
They mourned for him *par amour*,
Whan hem were bet to slepe;
But he was chaste and no lechour,
And swete as is the bramble flour,
That bereth the red hepe.

And so it fell upon a day,
Forsoth, as I you tellen may,
Sire Thopas wold out ride;
He worth upon his stede gray,
And in his hond a launcegay,
A long swerd by his side.

He priketh thurgh a faire forest,
Therin is many a wilde best,
  Ye bothe buck and hare,
And as he priked North and Est,
I telle it you, him had almeste
  Betidde a sory care.

Ther springen herbes grete and smale,
The licoris and the setewale,
  And many a cloue gilofre,
And notemuge to put in ale,
Whether it be moist or stale,
  Or for to lain in cofre.

The briddes singen, it is no nay,
The sperhauk and the popingay,
  That joye it was to here,
The throstel cok made eke his lay,
The wode dove upon the spray
  He sang ful loude and clere.

Sire Thopas fell in love-longing
Al whan he herd the throstel sing,
  And priked as he were wood;
His faire stede in his priking
So swatte, that men might him wring,
  His sides were al blood.

Sire Thopas eke so wery was
For priking on the softe gras,
  So fiers was his corage,
That doun he laid him in that place
To maken his stede som solace,
  And yaf him good forage.

A, Seinte Mary, *benedicite*,
What aileth this love at me
  To binde me so sore!
Me dremed all this night parde,
An elf-quene shal my lemman be,
  And slepe under my gore.

An elf-quene wol I love ywis,
For in this world no woman is
  Worthy to be my make || in toun,—
All other women I forsake,
And to an elf-quene I me take
  By dale and eke by doun.

Into his sadel he clombe anon,
And priked over stile and ston
  An elf-quene for to espie,
Til he so long had ridden and gone,
That he fond in a privee wone
  The contree of Faerie.

Wherin he soughte North and South,
And oft he spied with his mouth
  In many a forest wilde,
For in that contree n'as ther non,
That to him dorst ride or gon,
  Neither wif ne childe.

Til that ther came a gret geaunt,
His name was Sire Oliphaunt,
  A perilous man of dede,
He sayde, Child, by Termagaunt,
But if thou prike out of myn haunt,
  Anon I slee thy stede || with mace—
Here is the Quene of Faerie,
With harpe, and pipe, and simphonie,
  Dwelling in this place.

The child sayd, Al so mote I the,
To morwe wol I meten thee,
  Whan I have min armoure,
And yet I hope *par ma fay*,
That thou shalt with this launcegay
  Abien it ful soure; || thy mawe—
Shal I perce, if I may,
Or it be fully prime of the day,
  For here thou shalt be slawe.

Sire Thopas drow abak ful fast;
This geaunt at him stones cast
  Out of a fel staffe sling:
But faire escaped child Thopas,
And all it was thurgh Goddes grace,
  And thurgh his faire bering.

Yet listeneth, lordings, to my tale,
Merier than the nightingale,
  For now I wol you roune,
How Sire Thopas with sides smale,
Priking over hill and dale,
  Is comen agein to toune.

His mery men commandeth he,
To maken him bothe game and gle,
  For nedes must he fighte,
With a geaunt with hedes three,
For paramour and jolitee
  Of on that shone ful brighte.

Do come, he sayd, my minestrales
And gestours for to tellen tales
  Anon in min arming,
Of romaunces that ben reales,
Of popes and of cardinales,
  And eke of love-longing.

They fet him first the swete win,
And mede eke in a maselin,
  And real spicerie,
Of ginger-bred that was ful fin,
And licoris and eke comin,
  With suger that is trie.

He didde next his white lere
Of cloth of lake fin and clere
  A breche and eke a sherte,
And next his shert an haketon,
And over that an habergeon,
  For percing of his herte,

And over that a fin hauberk,
Was all ywrought of Jewes werk,
  Ful strong it was of plate,
And over that his cote-armoure,
As white as is the lily floure,
  In which he wold debate.

His sheld was all of gold so red,
And therin was a bores hed,
  A charboucle beside;
And ther he swore on ale and bred
How that the geaunt shuld be ded,
  Betide what so betide.

His jambeux were of cuirbouly,
His swerdes sheth of ivory,
  His helme of latoun bright,
His sadel was of rewel bone,
His bridel as the sonne shone,
  Or as the mone light.

His spere was of fin cypres,
That bodeth werre, and nothing pees,
  The hed ful sharpe yground.
His stede was all dapple gray,
It goth an aumble in the way
  Ful softely and round || in londe—
Lo, Lordes min, here is a fit;
If ye wol ony more of it,
  To telle it wol I fond.

Now hold your mouth *pour charite,*
Bothe knight and lady fre,
  And herkeneth to my spell,
Of bataille and of chevalrie,
Of ladies love and druerie,
  Anon I wol you tell.

Men speken of romaunces of pris,
Of Hornchild, and of Ipotis,
  Of Bevis, and Sire Guy,
Of Sire Libeux, and Pleindamour,
But Sire Thopas, he bereth the flour
  Of real chevalrie

His goode stede he al bestrode,
And forth upon his way he glode,
  As sparcle out of bronde;
Upon his crest he bare a tour,
And therin stiked a lily flour,
  God shilde his corps fro shonde.

And for he was a knight auntrous,
He n'olde slepen in non hous,
  But liggen in his hood,
His brighte helm was his wanger,
And by him baited his destrer
  Of herbes fin and good.

Himself drank water of the well,
As did the knight Sire Percivell
  So worthy under wede,
Til on a day———

THE TALE OF MELIBEUS.

PROLOGUE TO MELIBEUS.

No more of this for Goddes dignitee,
Quod oure hoste, for thou makest me
So wery of thy veray lewednesse,
That al so wisly God my soule blesse,
Min eres aken of thy drafty speche.
Now swiche a rime the devil I beteche;
This may wel be rime dogerel, quod he.
  Why so? quod I, why wolt thou letten me
More of my tale, than an other man,
Sin that it is the beste rime I can?
  By God, quod he, for plainly at o word,
Thy drafty riming is not worth a tord:
Thou dost nought elles but dispendest time.
Sire, at o word, thou shalt no lenger rime.
Let see wher thou canst tellen ought in geste,
Or tellen in prose somwhat at the leste,
In which ther be som mirthe or som doctrine.
  Gladly, quod I, by Goddes swete pine
I wol you tell a litel thing in prose,
That oughte liken you, as I suppose,
Or elles certes ye be to dangerous.
It is a moral tale vertuous,
Al be it told somtime in sondry wise
Of sondry folk, as I shal you devise.
  As thus, ye wote that every Evangelist,
That telleth us the peine of Jesu Crist,
Ne saith not alle thing as his felaw doth:
But natheles hir sentence is al soth,
And alle accorden as in hir sentence,
Al be ther in hir telling difference:
For som of hem say more, and som say lesse,
Whan they his pitous passion expresse;
I mene of Mark and Mathew, Luke and John,
But douteles hir sentence is all on.
Therfore, lordinges all, I you beseche,
If that ye thinke I vary in my speche,
As thus, though that I telle som del more
Of proverbes, than ye han herde before
Comprehended in this litel tretise here,
To enforcen with the effect of my matere,
And though I not the same wordes say
As ye han herde, yet to you alle I pray
Blameth me not, for, as in my sentence,
Shul ye nowher finden no difference
Fro the sentence of thilke tretise lite,
After the which this mery tale I write.
And therfore herkeneth what I shal say,
And let me tellen all my tale I pray.

THE TALE OF MELIBEUS.

A YONGE man called Melibeus, mighty and riche, begate upon his wif, that called was Prudence, a doughter which that called was Sophie.

Upon a day befell, that he for his disport is went into the feldes him to playe. His wif and eke his doughter hath he laft within his hous, of which the dores weren fast yshette. Foure of his olde foos han it espied, and setten ladders to the walles of his hous, and by the windowes ben entred, and beten his wif, and wounded his doughter with five mortal woundes, in five sondry places; this is to say, in hire feet, in hire hondes, in hire eres, in hire nose, and in hire mouth; and leften hire for dede, and wenten away.

Whan Melibeus retorned was into his hous, and

sey al this meschief, he, like a mad man, rending his clothes, gan to wepe and crie.

Prudence his wif, as fer forth as she dorste, besought him of his weping for to stint: but not forthy he gan to crie and wepen ever lenger the more.

This noble wif Prudence remembred hire upon the sentence of Ovide, in his book that cleped is the Remedie of love, wheras he saith; he is a fool that distourbeth the moder to wepe, in the deth of hire childe, til she have wept hire fille, as for a certain time: and than shal a man don his diligence with amiable wordes hire to reconforte and preye hire of hire weping for to stinte. For which reson this noble wif Prudence suffred hire housbond for to wepe and crie, as for a certain space; and whan she saw hire time, she sayde to him in this wise. Alas! my lord, quod she, why make ye yourself for to be like a fool? Forsothe it apperteineth not to a wise man, to maken swiche a sorwe. Youre doughter, with the grace of God, shal warish and escape. And al were it so that she right now were dede, ye ne ought not as for hire deth youreself to destroye. Senek saith; the wise man shal not take to gret discomfort for the deth of his children, but certes he shulde suffren it in patience, as wel as he abideth the deth of his owen propre persone.

This Melibeus answered anon and saide: what man (quod he) shulde of his weping stinte, that hath so gret a cause for to wepe? Jesu Crist, our Lord, himself wepte for the deth of Lazarus his frend. Prudence answered; certes wel I wote, attempre weping is nothing defended, to him that sorweful is, among folk in sorwe, but it is rather graunted him to wepe. The Apostle Poule unto the Romaines writeth; man shal rejoyce with hem that maken joye, and wepen with swiche folk as wepen. But though attempre weping be ygranted, outrageous weping certes is defended. Mesure of weping shulde be considered, after the lore that techeth us Senek. Whan that thy frend is dede (quod he) let not thin eyen to moiste ben of teres, ne to muche drie: although the teres comen to thin eyen, let hem not falle. And whan thou hast forgon thy frend, do diligence to get agein another frend: and this is more wisdom than for to wepe for thy frend, which that thou hast lorne, for therin is no bote. And therfore if ye governe you by sapience, put away sorwe out of youre herte. Remembreth you that Jesus Sirak sayth; a man that is joyous and glad in herte, it him conserveth florishing in his age: but sothly a sorweful herte maketh his bones drie. He saith eke thus, that sorwe in herte sleeth ful many a man. Salomon sayth, that right as mouthes in the shepes fleese anoien to the clothes, and the smale wormes to the tree, right so anoieth sorwe to the herte of man. Wherfore us ought as wel in the deth of oure children, as in the losse of oure goodes temporel, have patience.

Remembre you upon the patient Job, whan he hadde lost his children and his temporel substaunce, and in his body endured and received ful many a grevous tribulation, yet sayde he thus: Oure Lord hath yeve it to me, oure Lord hath beraft it me; right as oure Lord hath wold, right so is it don; yblessed be the name of oure Lord. To thise foresaide thinges answered Melibeus unto his wif Prudence: all thy wordes (quod he) ben trewe, and therto profitable, but trewely min herte is troubled with this sorwe so grevously, that I n'ot what to don. Let calle (quod Prudence) thyn trewe frendes alle, and thy linage, which that ben wise, and telleth to hem your cas, and herkeneth what they saye in conseilling, and governe you after hir sentence. Salomon saith; werke all thinges by conseil, and thou shalt never repente.

Than, by conseil of his wif Prudence, this Melibeus let callen a gret congregation of folk, as surgiens, phisiciens, olde folk and yonge, and som of his olde enemies reconciled (as by hir semblant) to his love and to his grace: and therwithal ther comen some of his neigheboures, that diden him reverence more for drede than for love, as it happeth oft. Ther comen also ful many subtil flaterers, and wise Advocats lerned in the lawe.

And whan thise folk togeder assembled weren, this Melibeus in sorweful wise shewed hem his cas, and by the manere of his speche, it semed that in herte he bare a cruel ire, redy to don vengeaunce upon his foos, and sodeinly desired that the werre shulde beginne, but natheles yet axed he his conseil upon this matere. A surgien, by licence and assent of swiche as weren wise, up rose, and unto Melibeus sayde, as ye moun here.

Sire, (quod he) as to us surgiens apperteineth, that we do to every wight the beste that we can, wher as we ben withholden, and to our patient that we do no damage: wherfore it happeth many time and ofte, that whan twey men han everich wounded other, o same surgien heleth hem both, wherfore unto our art it is not pertinent to norice werre, ne parties to supporte. But certes, as to the warishing of youre doughter, al be it so that perilously she be wounded, we shuln do so ententif besinesse fro day to night, that with the grace of God, she shal be hole and sound, as sone as is possible. Almost right in the same wise the phisiciens answerden, save that they saiden a fewe wordes more: that right as maladies ben cured by hir contraries, right so shal man warishe werre. His neigheboures ful of envie, his feined frendes that semed reconciled, and his flaterers, maden semblant of weping, and empeired and agregged muchel of this matere, in preysing gretly Melibee of might, of power, of richesse, and of frendes, despising the power of his adversaries: and saiden outrely, that he anon shulde wreken him on his foos, and beginnen werre.

Up rose than an Advocat that was wise, by leve and by conseil of other that were wise, and sayde: Lordinges, the nede for the which we ben assembled in this place, is a ful hevie thing, and an heigh matere, because of the wrong and of the wikkednesse that hath be don, and eke by reson of the grete damages, that in time coming ben possible to fallen for the same cause, and eke by reson of the gret richesse and power of the parties bothe, for the which resons, it were a ful gret peril to erren in this matere. Wherfore, Melibeus, this is oure sentence; we conseille you, aboven alle thing, that right anon thou do thy diligence in keping of thy propre persone, in swiche a wise that thou ne want non espie ne watche, thy body for to save. And after that, we conseille that in thin hous thou sette suffisant garnison, so that they moun as wel thy body as thy hous defende. But certes for to meeven werre, ne sodenly for to

do vengeaunce, we moun not deme in so litel time that it were profitable. Wherfore we axen leiser and space to have deliberation in this cas to deme; for the comune proverbe saith thus; He that sone demeth, sone shal repente. And eke men sain, that thilke juge is wise, that sone understondeth a matere, and jugeth by leiser. For al be it so, that al tarying be anoiful, algates it is not to repreve in yeving of jugement, ne in vengeance taking, whan it is suffisant and resonable. And that shewed our Lord Jesu Crist by ensample, for whan that the woman that was taken in advoutrie, was brought in his presence to knowen what shuld be don with hire persone, al be it that he wist wel himself what that he wolde answere, yet ne wolde he not answere sodeinly, but he wolde have deliberation, and in the ground he wrote twies; and by thise causes we axen deliberation: and we shuln than by the grace of God conseille the thing that shal be profitable.

Up sterte than the yonge folk at ones, and the most partie of that compagnie han scorned this olde wise man, and begonnen to make noise and saiden; Right so as while that iren is hot men shulde smite, right so men shuln do wreken hir wronges, while that they ben freshe and newe: and with loude voys they criden werre, werre. Up rose tho on of thise olde wise, and with his hand made countenaunce that men shuld holde hem stille, and yeve him audience. Lordinges, (quod he) ther is ful many a man that crieth werre, werre, that wote ful litel what werre amounteth. Werre at his beginning hath so gret an entring and so large, that every wight may enter whan him liketh, and lightly find werre: but certes what end that shal befalle, it is not light to know. For sothly whan that werre is ones begonne, ther is ful many a child unborne of his moder, that shal sterve yong, by cause of thilke werre, other elles live in sorwe, and dien in wretchednesse: and therfore or that any werre be begonne, men must have gret conseil and gret deliberation. And whan this olde man wende to enforcen his tale by resons, wel nie alle at ones begonne they to rise, for to breken his tale, and bidden him ful oft his wordes for to abregge. For sothly he that precheth to hem that listen not heren his wordes, his sermon hem anoieth. For Jesus Sirak sayth, that musike in weping is a noious thing. This is to sayn, as muche availleth to speke beforn folk to which his speche anoieth, as to singe beforne him that wepeth. And whan this wise man saw that him wanted audience, al shamefast he sette him doun agein. For Salomon saith: ther as thou ne mayst have non audience, enforce thee not to speke. I see wel, (quod this wise man) that the comune proverbe is soth, that good conseil wanteth, whan it is most nede.

Yet had this Melibeus in his conseil many folk, that prively in his ere conseilled him certain thing, and conseilled him the contrary in general audience. Whan Melibeus had herd that the gretest partie of his conseil were accorded that he shulde make werre, anon he consented to hire conseilling, and fully affermed hir sentence. Than dame Prudence, whan that she saw how that hire hosbonde shope him for to awreke him on his foes, and to beginne werre, she in ful humble wise, whan she saw hire time, sayde him these wordes: my lord, (quod she) I you beseche as hertly as I dare and can, ne haste you not to faste, and for alle guerdons as yeve me audience. For Piers Alphonse sayth; who so that doth to thee outher good or harme, haste thee not to quite it, for in this wise thy frend wol abide, and thin enemie shal the lenger live in drede. The proverbe sayth; he hasteth wel that wisely can abide: and in wikked hast is no profite.

This Melibee answered unto his wif Prudence: I purpose not (quod he) to werken by thy conseil, for many causes and resons: for certes every wight wold hold me than a fool; this is to sayn, if I for thy conseilling wolde change thinges, that ben ordeined and affirmed by so many wise men. Secondly, I say, that all women ben wicke, and non good of hem all. For of a thousand men, saith Salomon, I found o good man: but certes of alle women good woman found I never. And also certes, if I governed me by thy conseil, it shulde seme that I had yeve thee over me the maistrie: and God forbede that it so were. For Jesus Sirak sayth, that if the wif have the maistrie, she is contrarious to hire husbond. And Salomon sayth: never in thy lif to thy wif, ne to thy childe, ne to thy frend, ne yeve no power over thy self: for better it were that thy children axe of thee thinges that hem nedeth, than thou see thy self in the handes of thy children. And also if I wol werche by thy conseilling, certes it must be somtime secree, til it were time that it be knowen: and this ne may not be, if I shulde be conseilled by thee. [For it is written; the janglerie of women ne can no thing hide, save that which they wote not. After the Philosophre sayth; in wikked conseil women venquishen men: and for thise resons I ne owe not to be conseilled by thee.]

Whan dame Prudence, ful debonairly and with gret pacience, had herd all that hire husbonde liked for to say, than axed she of him licence for to speke, and sayde in this wise. My lord, (quod she) as to your first reson, it may lightly ben answerd: for I say that it is no folie to chaunge conseil whan the thing is chaunged, or elles whan the thing semeth otherwise than it semed afore. And moreover I say, though that ye have sworne and behight to performe your emprise, and nevertheles ye weive to performe thilke same emprise by just cause, men shuld not say therfore ye were a lyer, ne forsworn: for the book sayth, that the wise man maketh no lesing, whan he turneth his corage for the better. And al be it that your emprise be established and ordeined by gret multitude of folk, yet thar you not accomplish thilke ordinance but you liketh: for the trouthe of thinges, and the profit, ben rather founden in fewe folk that ben wise and ful of reson, than by gret multitude of folk, ther every man cryeth and clattereth what him liketh: sothly swiche multitude is not honest. As to the second reson, wheras ye say, that alle women ben wicke: save your grace, certes ye despise alle women in this wise, and he that all despiseth, as saith the book, all displeseth. And Senek saith, that who so wol have sapience, shal no man dispreise, but he shal gladly teche the science that he can, without presumption or pride: and swiche thinges as he nought can, he shal not ben ashamed to lere hem, and to enquere of lesse folk than himself. And, Sire, that ther hath ben ful many a good woman, may lightly be preved for certes, Sire, our Lord Jesu Crist n'olde never han descended to be borne of a woman, if all women

had be wicked. And after that, for the gret bountee that is in women, our Lord Jesu Crist whan he was risen from deth to lif, appered rather to a woman than to his Apostles. And though that Salomon sayde, he found never no good woman, it folweth not therfore, that all women be wicked: for though that he ne found no good woman, certes many another man hath founde many a woman ful good and trewe. Or elles peraventure the entent of Salomon was this, that in soveraine bountee he found no woman; this is to say, that ther is no wight that hath soveraine bountee, save God alone, as he himself recordeth in his Evangelies. For ther is no creature so good, that him ne wanteth somwhat of the perfection of God that is his maker. Youre thridde reson is this; ye say that if that ye governe you by my conseil, it shulde seme that ye had yeve me the maistrie and the lordship of your person. Sire, save your grace, it is not so; for if so were that no man shulde be conseilled but only of hem that han lordship and maistrie of his person, men n'olde not be conseilled so often: for sothly thilke man that asketh conseil of a purpos, yet hath he free chois whether he wol werke after that conseil or non. And as to your fourth reson, ther as ye sain that the janglerie of women can hide thinges that they wot not; as who so sayth, that a woman can not hide that she wote; Sire, thise wordes ben understonde of women that ben janglerresses and wicked; of which women men sain that three thinges driven a man out of his hous, that is to say, smoke, dropping of raine, and wicked wives. And of swiche women Salomon sayth, That a man were better dwell in desert, than with a woman that is riotous. And, sire, by your leve, that am not I; for ye have ful often assaied my gret silence and my gret patience, and eke how wel that I can hide and hele thinges, that men oughten secretly to hiden. And sothly as to your fifthe reson, wheras ye say, that in wicked conseil women venquishen men; God wote that thilke reson stant here in no stede: for understondeth now, ye axen conseil for to do wickednesse; and if ye wol werken wickednesse, and your wif restraineth thilke wicked purpos, and overcometh you by reson and by good conseil, certes your wif ought rather to be preised than to be blamed. Thus shulde ye understonde the philosophre that sayth, In wicked conseil women venquishen hir husbondes. And ther as ye blamen all women and hir resons, I shal shewe you by many ensamples, that many women have been ful good, and yet ben, and hir conseil holesome and profitable. Eke som men han sayd, that the conseil of women is either to dere, or elles to litel of pris. But al be it so that ful many a woman be bad, and hire conseil vile and nought worth, yet han men founden ful many a good woman, and discrete and wise in conseilling. Lo, Jacob, thurgh the good conseil of his mother Rebecke, wan the benison of his father, and the lordship over all his brethren. Judith, by hire good conseil, delivered the citee of Bethulie, in which she dwelt, out of the honde of Holofern, that had it beseged, and wolde it al destroye. Abigail delivered Nabal hire housbond fro David the king, that wolde han slain him, and appesed the ire of the king by hire wit, and by hire good conseilling. Hester by hire conseil enhaunced gretly the peple of God, in the regne of Assuerus the king. And the same bountee in good conseilling of many a good woman moun men rede and tell. And further more, whan that oure Lord had created Adam oure forme father, he sayd in this wise; it is not good to be a man allone: make we to him an helpe semblable to himself. Here moun ye see that if women weren not good, and hir conseil good and profitable, oure Lord God of heven wolde neither han wrought hem, ne called hem helpe of man, but rather confusion of man. And ther sayd a clerk ones in two vers; what is better than gold? Jaspre. What is better than jaspre? Wisdom. And what is better than wisdom? Woman. And what is better than a good woman? Nothing. And, Sire, by many other resons moun ye seen, that many women ben good, and hir conseil good and profitable. And therfore, Sire, if ye wol troste to my conseil, I shal restore you your doughter hole and sound: and I wol don to you so muche, that ye shuln have honour in this cas.

Whan Melibee had herd the wordes of his wif Prudence, he sayd thus: I se wel that the word of Salomon is soth; for he saith, that wordes, that ben spoken discretly by ordinaunce, ben honiecombes, for they yeven swetenesse to the soule, and holsomnesse to the body. And, wif, because of thy swete wordes, and eke for I have preved and assaied thy grete sapience and thy grete trouthe, I wol governe me by thy conseil in alle thing.

Now, Sire, (quod dame Prudence) and sin that ye vouchesafe to be governed by my conseil, I wol enforme you how that ye shuln governe yourself, in chesing of youre conseillours. Ye shuln first in alle your werkes mekely besechen to the heigh God, that he wol be your conseillour: and shapeth you to swiche entente that he yeve you conseil and comforte, as taught Tobie his sone; at alle times thou shalt blesse God, and preie him to dresse thy wayes; and loke that alle thy conseils ben in him for evermore. Seint James eke sayth; if any of you have nede of sapience, axe it of God. And afterwarde, than shullen ye take conseil in yourself, and examine wel your owen thoughtes, of swiche thinges as you thinketh that ben best for your profit. And than shuln ye drive fro your herte three thinges that ben contrarious to good conseil; that is to sayn, ire, coveitise, and hastinesse.

First, he that axeth conseil of himself, certes he must be withouten ire, for many causes. The first is this: he that hath gret ire and wrath in himself, he weneth alway that he may do thing that he may not do. And secondly, he that is irous and wroth, he may not wel deme: and he that may not wel deme, may not wel conseille. The thridde is this; he that is irous and wroth, as sayth Senek, ne may not speke but blameful thinges, and with his vicious wordes he stirreth other folk to anger and to ire. And eke, Sire, ye must drive coveitise out of your herte. For the Apostle sayth, that coveitise is the rote of alle harmes. And trosteth wel, that a coveitous man ne can not deme ne thinke, but only to fulfille the ende of his coveitise; and certes that ne may never ben accomplised; for ever the more haboundance that he hath of richesse, the more he desireth. And, Sire, ye must also drive out of youre herte hastinesse: for certes ye ne moun not deme for the beste a soden thought that falleth in youre herte, but ye must avise you on it ful ofte: for as ye have herde herebeforn, the commune proverbe is this; he that sone demeth, sone repenteth.

Sire, ye ne be not alway in like disposition, for

certes som thing that somtime semeth to you that it is good for to do, another time it semeth to you the contrarie.

And whan ye han taken conseil in yourself, and han demed by good deliberation swiche thing as you semeth beste, than rede I you that ye kepe it secree. Bewreye not your conseil to no persone, but if so be that ye wenen sikerly, that thurgh youre bewreying youre condition shal ben to you more profitable. For Jesus Sirak saith: neither to thy foo ne to thy frend discover not thy secree, ne thy folie: for they woln yeve you audience and loking, and supportation in youre presence, and scorne you in youre absence. Another clerk sayth, that scarsly shalt thou finden any persone that may kepe thy conseil secrely. The book sayth; while that thou kepest thy conseil in thin herte, thou kepest it in thy prison: and whan thou bewreyest thy conseil to any wight, he holdeth thee in his snare. And therfore you is better to hide your conseil in your herte, than to preye him to whom ye han bewreyed youre conseil, that he wol kepe it close and stille. For Seneca sayth: if so be that thou ne mayst not thin owen conseil hide, how darest thou preyen any other wight thy conseil secrely to kepe? but natheles, if thou wene sikerly that thy bewreying of thy conseil to a persone wol make thy condition to stonden in the better plight, than shalt thou telle him thy conseil in this wise. First, thou shalt make no semblant whether thee were lever pees or werre, or this or that; ne shewe him not thy will ne thin entente: for troste wel that communly these conseillours ben flaterers, namely the conseillours of grete lordes, for they enforcen hem alway rather to speken plesant wordes enclining to the lordes lust, than wordes that ben trewe or profitable: and therfore men sayn, that the riche man hath selde good conseil, but if he have it of himself. And after that thou shalt consider thy frendes and thin enemies. And as touching thy frendes, thou shalt consider which of hem ben most feithful and most wise, and eldest and most appreved in conseilling: and of hem shalt thou axe thy conseil, as the cas requireth.

I say, that first ye shuln clepe to youre conseil youre frendes that ben trewe. For Salomon saith: that right as the herte of a man deliteth in savour that is swote, right so the conseil of trewe frendes yeveth swetenesse to the soule. He sayth also, ther may nothing be likened to the trewe frend: for certes gold ne silver ben not so muche worth as the good will of a trewe frend. And eke he sayth, that a trewe frend is a strong defence; who so that it findeth, certes he findeth a gret tresor. Than shuln ye eke consider if that your trewe frendes ben discrete and wise: for the book saith, axe alway thy conseil of hem that ben wise. And by this same reson shuln ye clepen to youre conseil youre frendes that ben of age, swiche as han seyn and ben expert in many thinges, and ben appreved in conseillinges. For the book sayth, in olde men is al the sapience, and in longe time the prudence. And Tullius sayth, that grete thinges ne ben not ay accomplised by strengthe, ne by delivernesse of body, but by good conseil, by auctoritee of persones, and by science: the which three thinges ne ben not feble by age, but certes they enforcen and encresen day by day. And than shuln ye kepe this for a general reule. First ye shuln clepe to youre conseil a fewe of youre frendes that ben especial. For Salomon saith; many frendes have thou, but among a thousand chese thee on to be thy conseillour. For al be it so, that thou first ne telle thy conseil but to a fewe, thou mayest afterwarde tell it to mo folk, if it be nede. But loke alway that thy conseillours have thilke three conditions that I have sayd before; that is to say, that they be trewe, wise, and of olde experience. And werke not alway in every nede by on conseillour allone: for somtime behoveth it to be conseilled by many. For Salomon sayth; salvation of thinges is wher as ther ben many conseillours.

Now sith that I have told you of which folk ye shulde be conseilled: now wol I teche you which conseil ye ought to eschue. First ye shuln eschue the conseilling of fooles; for Salomon sayth, Take no conseil of a fool: for he ne can not conseille but after his owen lust and his affection. The book sayth, the propretee of a fool is this: He troweth lightly harme of every man, and lightly troweth all bountee in himself. Thou shalt eke eschue the conseilling of all flaterers, swiche as enforcen hem rather to preisen youre persone by flaterie, than for to tell you the sothfastnesse of thinges.

Wherfore Tullius sayth, Among alle the pestilences that ben in frendship, the gretest is flaterie. And therfore it is more nede that thou eschue and drede flaterers, than any other peple. The book saith, Thou shalt rather drede and flee fro the swete wordes of flatering preisers, than fro the egre wordes of thy frend that saith thee sothes. Salomon saith, that the wordes of a flaterer is a snare to cacchen innocentes. He sayth also, He that speketh to his frend wordes of swetenesse and of plesaunce, he setteth a net beforne his feet to cacchen him. And therfore sayth Tullius, Encline not thin eres to flaterers, ne take no conseil of wordes of flaterie. And Caton sayth, Avise thee wel, and eschue wordes of swetenesse and of plesaunce. And eke thou shalt eschue the conseilling of thin olde enemies that ben reconciled. The book sayth, that no wight retourneth safely into the grace of his olde enemie. And Ysope sayth, Ne trost not to hem, to which thou hast somtime had werre or enmitee, ne telle hem not thy conseil. And Senek telleth the cause why. It may not be, sayth he, ther as gret fire hath long time endured, that ther ne dwelleth som vapour of warmnesse. And therfore saith Salomon, In thin olde foo trost thou never. For sikerly, though thin enemie be reconciled, and maketh thee chere of humilitee, and louteth to thee with his hed, ne trost him never: for certes he maketh thilke feined humilitee more for his profite, than for any love of thy persone; because that he demeth to have victorie over thy persone by swiche feined contenance, the which victorie he might not have by strif of werre. And Peter Alphonse sayth; Make no felawship with thin olde enemies, for if thou do hem bountee, they wollen perverten it to wickednesse. And eke thou must eschue the conseilling of hem that ben thy servaunts, and beren thee gret reverence: for paraventure they fein it more for drede than for love. And therfore saith a philosophre in this wise: Ther is no wight parfitly trewe to him that he to sore dredeth. And Tullius sayth, Ther n'is no might so gret of any emperour that longe may

endure, but if he have more love of the peple than drede. Thou shalt also eschue the conseilling of folk that ben dronkelewe, for they ne can no conseil hide. For Salomon sayth, Ther n'is no privetee ther as regneth dronkennesse. Ye shuln also have in suspect the conseilling of swiche folk as conseille you o thing prively, and conseille you the contrarie openly. For Cassiodore sayth, That it is a manere sleighte to hinder his enemy whan he sheweth to don a thing openly, and werketh prively the contrary. Thou shalt also have in suspect the conseilling of wicked folk, for hir conseil is alway ful of fraude. And David sayth; Blisful is that man that hath not folwed the conseilling of shrewes. Thou shalt also eschue the conseilling of yonge folk, for hir conseilling is not ripe, as Salomon saith.

Now, Sire, sith I have shewed you of which folk ye shullen take youre conseil, and of which folk ye shullen eschue the conseil, now wol I teche you how ye shuln examine your conseil after the doctrine of Tullius. In examining than of your conseillours, ye shuln considre many thinges. Alderfirst thou shalt considre that in thilke thing that thou purposest, and upon what thing that thou wolt have conseil, that veray trouthe be said and conserved; this is to say, telle trewely thy tale: for he that sayth false, may not wel be conseilled in that cas, of which he lieth. And after this, thou shalt considre the thinges that accorden to that thou purposest for to do by thy conseillours, if reson accord therto, and eke if thy might may atteine therto, and if the more part and the better part of thin conseillours accorden therto or no. Than shalt thou considre what thing shal folwe of that conseilling; as hate, pees, werre, grace, profite, or domage, and many other thinges: and in alle thinges thou shalt chese the beste, and weive alle other thinges. Than shalt thou considre of what roote is engendred the matere of thy conseil, and what fruit it may conceive and engendre. Thou shalt eke considre alle the causes, from whennes they ben sprongen. And whan thou hast examined thy conseil, as I have said, and which partie is the better and more profitable, and hast appreved it by many wise folk and olde, than shalt thou considre, if thou mayst performe it and maken of it a good ende. For certes reson wol not that any man shulde beginne a thing, but if he mighte performe it as him oughte: ne no wight shulde take upon him so hevy a charge, that he might not beren it. For the proverbe sayth; he that to muche embraceth distreineth litel. And Caton saith; assay to do swiche thinges as thou hast power to don, lest the charge oppresse thee so sore, that thee behoveth to weive thing that thou hast begonne. And if so be that thou be in doute, whether thou mayst performe a thing or non, chese rather to suffre than to beginne. And Peter Alphonse sayth; If thou hast might to don a thing, of which thou must repente, it is better nay than ya: this is to sayn, that thee is better to holde thy tonge stille than for to speke. Than mayst thou understonde by stronger resons, that if thou hast power to performe a werk, of which thou shalt repente, than is thee better that thou suffre than beginne. Wel sain they that defenden every wight to assaye a thing of which he is in doute, whether he may performe it or non. And after whan ye han examined youre conseil, as I have said beforne, and knowen wel that ye moun performe your emprise, conferme it than sadly til it be at an ende.

Now is it reson and time that I shewe you whan, and wherfore, that ye moun chaunge your conseil, withouten repreve. Sothly, a man may change his purpos and his conseil, if the cause ceseth, or whan a newe cas betideth. For the lawe saith, that upon thinges that newly betiden, behoveth newe conseil. And Seneca sayth; if thy conseil is comen to the eres of thin enemies, chaunge thy conseil. Thou mayst also chaunge thy conseil, if so be that thou find that by errour, or by other cause, harme or damage may betide. Also if thy conseil be dishoneste, other elles come of dishoneste cause, chaunge thy conseil: for the lawes sain, that all behestes that ben dishoneste ben of no value: and eke, if so be that it be impossible, or may not goodly be performed or kept.

And take this for a general reule, that every conseil that is affermed so strongly, that it may not be chaunged for no condition that may betide, I say that thilke conseil is wicked.

This Melibeus, whan he had herd the doctrine of his wif dame Prudence, answered in this wise. Dame, quod he, as yet unto this time ye han wel and covenably taught me, as in general, how I shal governe me in the chesing and in the withholding of my conseillours: but now wold I fain that ye wold condescend in especial, and telle me how liketh you, or what semeth you by oure conseillours that we han chosen in oure present nede.

My lord, quod she, I beseche you in alle humblesse, that ye wol not wilfully replie agein my resons, ne distempre your herte, though I speke thing that you displese; for God wote that, as in min entente, I speke it for your beste, for youre honour and for youre profite eke, and sothly I hope that youre benignitee wol taken it in patience. And trosteth me wel, quod she, that youre conseil as in this cas ne shulde not (as to speke proprely) be called a conseilling, but a motion or a meving of folie, in which conseil ye han erred in many a sondry wise.

First and forward, ye han erred in the assembling of youre conseillours; for ye sholde first han cleped a fewe folk to your conseil, and after ye mighte han shewed it to mo folk, if it hadde be nede. But certes ye han sodeinly cleped to your conseil a gret multitude of peple, ful chargeant and ful anoyous for to here. Also ye han erred, for ther as ye shulde han only cleped to youre conseile youre trewe frendes, olde and wise, ye han cleped straunge folk, yonge folk, false flaterers, and enemies reconciled, and folk that don you reverence withouten love. And eke ye han erred, for ye han brought with you to youre conseil ire, coveitise, and hastifnesse, the which three thinges ben contrary to every conseil honest and profitable: the which three thinges ye han not anientissed or destroyed, neither in youreself ne in youre conseillours, as you ought. Ye han erred also, for ye han shewed to youre conseillours youre talent and youre affections to make werre anon, and for to do vengeaunce, and they han espied by youre wordes to what thing ye ben enclined: and therfore han they conseilled you rather to youre talent, than to youre profite. Ye han erred also, for it semeth that you sufficeth to han ben conseilled by thise conseillours only, and with litel avis, wheras in so high and so gret a nede, it had ben necessarie mo

conseillours, and more deliberation to performe your emprise. Ye han erred also, for ye han not examined your conseil in the foresaid manere, ne in due manere, as the cas requireth. Ye han erred also, for ye han maked no division betwix youre conseillours; this is to sayn, betwix youre trewe frendes and youre feined conseillours: ne ye han not knowe the wille of your trewe frendes, olde and wise, but ye han cast alle hir wordes in an hochepot, and enclined your herte to the more part and to the greter nombre, and ther be ye condescended; and sith ye wot wel that men shuln alway finde a greter nombre of fooles than of wise men, and therfore the conseillings that ben at congregations and multitudes of folk, ther as men take more regard to the nombre, than to the sapience of persones, ye seen wel, that in swiche conseillings fooles han the maistrie. Melibeus answered and said agein: I graunte wel that I have erred; but ther as thou hast told me herebeforne, that he n'is not to blame that chaungeth his conseil in certain cas, and for certain and just causes, I am al redy to chaunge my conseil right as thou wolt devise. The proverbe sayth; for to don sinne is mannish, but certes for to persevere long in sinne is werke of the Divel.

To this sentence answered anon dame Prudence, and saide; examineth (quod she) wel your conseil, and let us see the which of hem han spoken most resonably, and taught you best conseil. And for as muche as the examination is necessarie, let us beginne at the Surgiens and at the Physiciens, that first spaken in this mater. I say that Physiciens and Surgiens han sayde you in youre conseil discretly, as hem oughte: and in hir speche saiden ful wisely, that to the office of hem apperteineth to don to every wight honour and profite, and no wight to anoye, and after hir craft to don gret diligence unto the cure of hem which that they han in hir governaunce. And, Sire, right as they han answered wisely and discretly, right so rede I that they be highly and soverainly guerdoned for hir noble speche, and eke for they shulden do the more ententif besinesse in the curation of thy dere doughter. For al be it so that they ben youre frendes, therfore shullen ye not suffren, that they serve you for nought, but ye oughte the rather guerdone hem, and shewe hem youre largesse. And as touching the proposition, which the Physiciens entreteden in this cas, this is to sain, that in maladies, that a contrarie is warished by another contrarie; I wold fain knowe how ye understonde thilke text, and what is youre sentence. Certes, quod Melibeus, I understond it in this wise; that right as they han don me a contrarie, right so shulde I don hem another; for right as they han venged hem upon me and don me wrong, right so shal I venge me upon hem, and don hem wrong, and than have I cured a contrarie by another.

Lo, lo, quod dame Prudence, how lightly is every man enclined to his owen desire and his owen plesaunce! certes (quod she) the wordes of the Physiciens ne shulden not han ben understonden in that wise; for certes wickednesse is not contrarie to wickednesse, ne vengeaunce to vengeaunce, ne wrong to wrong, but they ben semblable: and therfore a vengeaunce is not warished by another vengeaunce, ne a wrong by another wrong, but everich of hem encreseth and aggreggeth other. But certes the wordes of the Physiciens shulden ben understonde in this wise; for good and wickednesse ben two contraries, and pees and werre, vengeaunce and suffraunce, discord and accord, and many other thinges: but certes, wickednesse shal be warished by goodnesse, discord by accord, werre by pees, and so forth of other thinges. And hereto accordeth Seint Poule the Apostle in many places: he sayth, ne yelde not harme for harme, ne wicked speche for wicked speche, but do wel to him that doth to thee harme, and blesse him that saith to thee harme. And in many other places he amonesteth pees and accord. But now wol I speke to you of the conseil, which that was yeven to you by the men of lawe, and the wise folk, and old folke, that sayden alle by on accord as ye han herd beforne, that over alle thinges ye shuld do youre diligence to kepe youre persone, and to warnestore your house: and saiden also, that in this cas you oughte for to werchen ful avisely and with gret deliberation. And, Sire, as to the first point, that toucheth the keping of youre persone, ye shuln understond, that he that hath werre, shal ever more devoutly and mekely preien beforne alle thinges, that Jesu Crist of his mercie wol han him in his protection, and ben his soveraine helping at his nede: for certes in this world ther is no wight that may be conseilled ne kept suffisantly, withoute the keping of oure lord Jesu Crist. To this sentence accordeth the Prophete David that sayth: if God ne kepe the citee, in idel waketh he that kepeth it. Now, Sire, than shuln ye committe the keping of youre persone to youre trewe frendes, that ben appreved and yknowe, and of hem shuln ye axen helpe, youre persone for to kepe. For Caton saith: if thou have nede of helpe, axe it of thy frendes, for ther n'is non so good a Physicien as thy trewe frend. And after this than shuln ye kepe you fro alle straunge folk, and fro lieres, and have alway in suspect hir compaignie. For Piers Alphonse sayth: ne take no compaignie by the way of a straunge man, but if so be that thou have knowen him of lenger time: and if so be that he falle into thy compaignie paraventure withouten thin assent, enquere than, as subtilly as thou maist, of his conversation, and of his lif beforne, and feine thy way, saying thou wolt go thider as thou wolt not go: and if he bere a spere, hold thee on the right side, and if he bere a swerd, hold thee on his left side. And after this than shuln ye kepe you wisely from all swiche manere peple as I have sayed before, and hem and hir conseil eschue. And after this than shuln ye kepe you in swiche manere, that for any presumption of youre strengthe, that ye ne despise not, ne account not the might of your adversary so lite, that ye let the keping of youre persone for your presumption; for every wise man dredeth his enemie. And Salomon sayth; welful is he that of alle hath drede; For certes he that thurgh the hardinesse of his herte, and thurgh the hardinesse of himself, hath to gret presumption, him shal evil betide. Than shuln ye evermo countrewaite emboyssements, and alle espiaile. For Senek sayth, that the wise man that dredeth harmes, eschueth harmes; ne he ne falleth into perils, that perils eschueth. And al be it so, that it seme that thou art in siker place, yet shalt thou alway do thy diligence in keping of thy persone;

this is to sayn, ne be not negligent to kepe thin persone, not only fro thy gretest enemy, but also fro thy leste enemie. Senek sayth ; a man that is wel avised, he dredeth his leste enemie. Ovide sayth, that the litel wesel wol slee the gret boll and the wilde hart. And the book sayth ; a litel thorne may prikke a king ful sore, and a litel hound wol hold the wilde bore. But natheles, I say not thou shalt be so coward, that thou doute wher as is no drede. The book saith, that som men [han taught hir deceivour, for they han to muche dreded] to be deceived. Yet shalt thou drede to be empoysoned; and [therfore shalt thou] kepe thee fro the compagnie of scorners : for the book sayth, with scorners ne make no compagnie, but flee hir wordes as venime.

Now as to the second point, wheras youre wise conseillours conseilled you to warnestore your hous with gret diligence, I wolde fain knowe how that ye understode thilke wordes, and what is youre sentence.

Melibeus answered and saide ; Certes I understond it in this wise, that I shal warnestore min hous with toures, swiche as han castelles and other manere edifices, and armure, and artelries, by which thinges I may my persone and myn hous so kepen and defenden, that min enemies shuln ben in drede min hous for to approche.

To this sentence answered anon Prudence. Warnestoring (quod she) of heighe toures and of grete edifices, is with grete costages and with grete travaille ; and whan that they ben accompliced, yet ben they not worth a stre, but if they ben defended by trewe frendes, that ben olde and wise. And understonde wel, that the greteste and strongeste garneson that a riche man may have, as wel to kepen his persone as his goodes, is, that he be beloved with his subgets, and with his neighebours. For thus sayth Tullius, that ther is a maner garneson, that no man may venquish ne discomfite, and that is a lord to be beloved of his citizeins, and of his peple.

Now, Sire, as to the thridde point, wheras youre olde and wise conseillours sayden, that you ne oughte not sodeinly ne hastily proceden in this nede, but that you oughte purveyen and appareilen you in this cas, with gret diligence and gret deliberation ; trewely, I trowe, that they sayden right wisely and right soth. For Tullius sayth : in every nede er thou beginne it, appareile thee with gret diligence. Than say I, that in vengeaunce taking, in werre, in bataille, and in warnestoring, er thou beginne, I rede that thou appareile thee therto, and do it with gret deliberation. For Tullius sayth, that longe appareiling tofore the bataille, maketh short victorie. And Cassiodorus sayth : the garneson is stronger, whan it is longe time avised.

But now let us speken of the conseil that was accorded by youre neighebours, swiche as don you reverence withouten love ; youre olde enemies reconciled ; your flatereres, that conseilled you certain thinges prively, and openly conseilled you the contrarie ; the yonge folk also, that conseilled you to venge you, and to make werre anon. Certes, Sire, as I have sayde beforne, ye han gretly erred to han cleped swiche maner folk to youre conseil, which conseillours ben ynough reproved by the resons aforesaid. But natheles, let us now descende to the special. Ye shul first proceden after the doctrine of Tullius. Certes the trouthe of this matere or of this conseil nedeth not diligently to enquere, for it is wel wist, which they ben that han don to you this trespas and vilanie, and how many trespasours, and in what manere they han don to you all this wrong, and all this vilanie. And after this, than shuln ye examine the second condition, which that the same Tullius addeth in this matere. For Tullius putteth a thing, which that he clepeth consenting : this is to sayn, who ben they, and which ben they, and how many, that consenten to thy conseil in thy wilfulnesse, to don hastif vengeaunce. And let us considre also who ben they, and how many ben they, and which ben they, that consenteden to youre adversaries. As to the first point, it is wel knowen which folk they be that consenteden to youre wilfulnesse. For trewely, all tho that conseileden you to maken sodein werre, ne ben not youre frendes. Let us now considre which ben they that ye holden so gretly youre frendes, as to youre persone : for al be it so that ye be mighty and riche, certes ye ne ben but allone : for certes ye ne han no child but a doughter, ne ye ne han no brethren, ne cosins germains, ne non other nigh kinrede, wherfore that youre enemies for drede shulde stinte to plede with you, or to destroye youre persone. Ye knowen also, that your richesses moten ben dispended in diverse parties ; and whan that every wight hath his part, they ne wollen taken but litel regard to venge youre deth. But thin enemies ben three, and they han many brethren, children, cosins, and other nigh kinrede : and though so were, that thou haddest slain of hem two or three, yet dwellen ther ynow to wreken hir deth, and to slee thy persone. And though so be that youre kinrede be more stedefast and siker than the kin of your adversaries, yet natheles youre kinrede is but a fer kinrede ; they ben but litel sibbe to you, and the kin of youre enemies ben nigh sibbe to hem. And certes as in that, hir condition is better than youres. Than let us considre also of the conseilling of hem that conseilled you to take sodein vengeance, whether it accorde to reson : and certes, ye knowe wel, nay ; for as by right and reson, ther may no man taken vengeaunce on no wight, but the juge that hath the jurisdiction of it, whan it is ygraunted him to take thilke vengeaunce hastily, or attemprely, as the lawe requireth. And yet moreover of thilke word that Tullius clepeth consenting, thou shalt considre, if thy might and thy power may consente and suffice to thy wilfulnesse, and to thy conseillours : and certes, thou mayest wel say, that nay ; for sikerly, as for to speke proprely, we moun do nothing but only swiche thing as we moun don rightfully : and certes rightfully ye ne mowe take no vengeance, as of your propre auctoritee. Than mowe ye sen that your power ne consenteth not, ne accordeth not to youre wilfulnesse. Now let us examine the thridde point, that Tullius clepeth consequent. Thou shalt understonde, that the vengeaunce that thou purposest for to take, is the consequent, and therof folweth another vengeance, peril, and werre, and other damages withouten nombre, of which we ben not ware, as at this time. And as touching the fourthe point, that Tullius clepeth engendring, thou shalt consider, that this wrong which that is don to thee, is engendred of the hate of thin enemies, and of the vengeaunce taking

upon that wold engender another vengeaunce, and muchel sorwe and wasting of richesses, as I sayde ere.

Now, sire, as to the point, that Tullius clepeth causes, which that is the last point, thou shalt understonde, that the wrong that thou hast received, hath certaine causes, which that clerkes clepen *oriens*, and *efficiens*, and *causa longinqua*, and *causa propinqua*, this is to sayn, the fer cause, and the nigh cause. The fer cause is almighty God, that is cause of alle thinges: the ner cause, is thin three enemies; the cause accidental was hate; the cause material, ben the five woundes of thy doughter; the cause formal, is the maner of hir werking, that broughten ladders, and clomben in at thy windowes; the cause final was for to slee thy doughter; it letted not in as muche as in hem was. But for to speke of the fer cause, as to what ende they shuln come, or what shal finally betide of hem in this cas, ne can I not deme, but by conjecting and supposing: for we shuln suppose, that they shuln come to a wicked ende, because that the book of Decrees sayth: Selden or with gret peine ben causes ybrought to a good ende, whan they ben badly begonne.

Now, Sire, if men wold axen me, why that God suffred men to do you this vilanie, certes I can not wel answer, as for no sothfastnesse. For the Apostle sayth, that the sciences, and the jugements of oure Lord God Almighty ben ful depe; ther may no man comprehend ne serche hem suffisantly. Natheles, by certain presumptions and conjectings, I hold and beleve, that God, which that is ful of justice and of rightwisenesse, hath suffered this betide, by just cause resonable.

Thy name is Melibee, this is to sayn, a man that drinketh hony. Thou hast dronke so muche hony of swete temporel richesses, and delices, and honours of this world, that thou art dronken, and hast forgotten Jesu Crist thy creatour: thou ne hast not don to him swiche honour and reverence as thee ought, ne thou ne hast wel ytaken kepe to the wordes of Ovide, that sayth: Under the honey of the goodes of thy body is hid the venime that sleth the soule. And Salomon sayth: If thou hast founden hony, ete of it that sufficeth; for if thou ete of it out of mesure, thou shalt spewe, and be nedy and poure. And peraventure Crist hath thee in despit, and hath tourned away fro thee his face, and his eres of misericorde; and also he hath suffred, that thou hast ben punished in the manere that thou hast ytrespased. Thou hast don sinne again oure Lord Crist, for certes the three enemies of mankind, that is to sayn, the flesh, the fend, and the world, thou hast suffred hem entre into thin herte wilfully, by the windowes of thy body, and hast not defended thyself suffisantly agein hir assautes, and hir temptations, so that they han wounded thy soule in five places, this is to sayn the dedly sinnes that ben entred into thyn herte by thy five wittes: and in the same manere our Lord Crist hath wold and suffred, that thy three enemies ben entred into thyn hous by the windowes, and han ywounded thy doughter in the foresayd manere.

Certes, quod Melibee, I see wel that ye enforce you muchel by wordes to overcomen me, in swiche manere, that I shal not venge me on mine enemies, shewing me the perils and the evils that mighten falle of this vengeaunce: but who so wolde considre in alle vengeaunces the perils and evils that mighten sue of vengeaunce taking, a man wold never take vengeaunce, and that were harme: for by the vengeaunce taking ben the wicked men dissevered fro the goode men. And they that han will to do wickednesse, restreinen hir wicked purpos, whan they sen the punishing and the chastising of the trespasours. [To this answered dame Prudence: Certes, quod she, I graunte you that of vengeaunce taking cometh muche evil and muche good; but vengeaunce taking apperteineth not to everich on, but only to juges, and to hem that han the jurisdiction over the trespasours;] and yet say I more, that right as a singuler persone sinneth in taking vengeaunce of another man, right so sinneth the juge, if he do no vengeaunce of hem that it han deserved. For Senek sayth thus: That maister (he sayth) is good, that preveth shrewes. And Cassiodore saith: A man dredeth to do outrages, whan he wot and knoweth, that it displeseth to the juges and soveraines. And another sayth: The juge that dredeth to do right, maketh men shrewes. And Seint Poule the Apostle sayth in his Epistle, whan he writeth unto the Romaines, that the juges beren not the spere withouten cause, but they beren it to punishe the shrewes and misdoers, and for to defende the goode men. If ye wiln than take vengeaunce of youre enemies, ye shuln retourne or have your recours to the juge, that hath the jurisdiction upon hem, and he shal punishe hem, as the lawe axeth and requireth.

A, sayd Melibee, this vengeaunce liketh me nothing. I bethink me now, and take hede how that fortune hath norished me fro my childhode, and hath holpen me to passe many a stronge pas: now wol I assayen hire, trowing, with Goddes helpe, that she shal helpe me my shame for to venge.

Certes, quod Prudence, if ye wol werke by my conseil, ye shuln not assaye fortune by no way: ne ye ne shuln not lene or bowe unto hire, after the wordes of Senek; for thinges that ben folily don, and tho that ben don in hope of fortune, shuln never come to good ende. And as the same Senek sayth: The more clere and the more shining that fortune is, the more brotel and the soner broke she is. Trusteth not in hire, for she n'is not stedefast ne stable: for whan thou trowest to be most siker and seure of hire helpe, she wol faille and deceive thee. And wheras ye sayn, that fortune hath norished you fro youre childhode, I say that in so muchel ye shuln the lesse truste in hire, and in hire wit. For Senek saith: What man that is norished by fortune, she maketh him a gret fool. Now than sin ye desire and axe vengeaunce, and the vengeaunce, that is don after the lawe and before the juge, ne liketh you not, and the vengeaunce, that is don in hope of fortune, is perilous and uncertain, than have ye non other remedie, but for to have your recours unto the soveraine juge, that vengeth alle vilanies, and wronges; and he shal venge you, after that himself witnesseth, wheras he saith; Leveth the vengeaunce to me, and I shal do it.

Melibeus answered: If I ne venge me of the vilanie that men han don to me, I sompne or warne hem, that han don to me vilanie, and alle other, to do me another vilanie. For it is written; If thou take no vengeaunce of an olde vilany, thou sompnest thin adversaries to do thee a newe vilanie: and also for my suffraunce, men wolden do me so

muche vilanie, that I might neither bere it ne susteine; and so shulde I ben put and holden over lowe. For som men sain, In muchel suffring shul many thinges falle unto thee, which thou shalt not mowe suffre.

Certes, quod Prudence, I graunte you wel, that overmuchel suffraunce is not good, but yet ne folweth it not therof, that every persone to whom men don vilanie, shuld take of it vengeaunce: for that apperteineth and longeth all only to the juges, for they shul venge the vilanies and injuries: and therfore tho two auctoritees, that ye han sayd above, ben only understonden in the juges: for whan they suffren overmuchel the wronges and vilanies to be don, withouten punishing, they sompne not a man all only for to do newe wronges, but they commaunden it: al so as a wise man sayth, that the juge that correcteth not the sinner, commaundeth and biddeth him do sinne. And the juges and soveraines mighten in hir lond so muche suffre of the shrewes and misdoers, that they shulden by swiche suffraunce, by proces of time, wexen of swiche power and might, that they shuld putte out the juges and the soveraines from hir places, and atte laste maken hem lese hir lordshippes.

But now let us putte, that ye have leve to venge you: I say ye be not of might and power, as now to venge you: for if ye wol maken comparison unto the might of youre adversaries, ye shuln finde in many thinges, that I have shewed you er this, that hir condition is better than youres, and therfore say I, that it is good as now, that ye suffre and be patient.

Forthermore ye knowen wel, that after the commune saw, it is a woodnesse, a man to strive with a stronger, or a more mighty man than he is himself; and for to strive with a man of even strengthe, that is to say, with as strong a man as he is, it is peril; and for to strive with a weker man, it is folie; and therfore shulde a man flee striving, as muchel as he mighte. For Salomon sayth: It is a gret worship to a man to kepe him fro noise and strif. And if it so happe, that a man of greter mighte and strengthe than thou art, do thee grevaunce: studie and besie thee rather to stille the same grevaunce, than for to venge thee. For Senek sayth, that he putteth him in a grete peril, that striveth with a greter man than he is himself. And Caton sayth; If a man of higher estat or degree, or more mighty than thou, do thee anoye or grevance, suffre him: for he that ones hath greved thee, may another time releve thee and helpe thee. Yet sette I cas, ye have bothe might and licence for to venge you, I say that ther ben ful many thinges that shuln restreine you of vengeance taking, and make you for to encline to suffre, and for to han patience in the wronges that han ben don to you. First and forward, if ye wol considre the defautes that ben in youre owen persone, for which defautes God hath suffred you have this tribulation, as I have sayd to you herebeforne. For the Poete sayth, that we oughten patiently taken the tribulations that comen to us, whan that we thinken and consideren, that we han deserved to have hem. And Seint Gregorie sayth, that whan a man considereth wel the nombre of his defautes and of his sinnes, the peines and the tribulations that he suffereth semen the lesse unto him. And in as muche as him thinketh his sinnes more hevy and grevous, in so muche semeth his peine the lighter and the esier unto him. Also ye owen to encline and bowe youre herte, to take the patience of oure Lord Jesu Crist, as sayth Seint Peter in his Epistles. Jesu Crist (he saith) hath suffred for us, and yeven ensample to every man to folwe and sue him, for he dide never sinne, ne never came ther a vilains word out of his mouth. Whan men cursed him, he cursed hem nought; and whan men beten him, he manaced hem nought. Also the gret patience, which Seintes, that ben in Paradis, han had in tribulations that they han suffred, withouten hir desert or gilt, oughte muchel stirre you to patience. Forthermore, ye shulde enforce you to have patience, considering that the tribulations of this world but litel while endure, and sone passed ben and gon, and the joye that a man seketh to han by patience in tribulations is perdurable; after that the Apostle sayth in his Epistle; the joye of God, he sayth, is perdurable, that is to sayn, everlasting. Also troweth and beleveth stedfastly, that he n'is not wel ynorished ne wel ytaught, that cannot have patience, or wol not receive patience. For Salomon sayth, that the doctrine and wit of a man is knowen by patience. And in another place he sayeth, that he that is patient, governeth him by gret prudence. And the same Salomon saith: The angrie and wrathful man maketh noises, and the patient man attempreth and stilleth hem. He saith also, It is more worth to be patient than for to be right strong. And he that may have the lordshipe of his owen herte, is more to preise, than he that by his force or strengthe taketh gret citees. And therfore sayth Seint James in his Epistle, that patience is a gret vertue of perfection.

Certes, quod Melibee, I graunte you, Dame Prudence, that patience is a gret vertue of perfection, but every man may not have the perfection that ye seken, ne I am not of the nombre of the right parfit men: for min herte may never be in pees, unto the time it be venged. And al be it so, that it was gret peril to min enemies to do me a vilanie in taking vengeaunce upon me, yet token they non hede of the peril, but fulfilleden hir wicked will and hir corage: and therfore me thinketh men oughten not repreve me, though I put me in a litel peril for to venge me, and though I do a gret excesse, that is to sayn, that I venge on outrage by another.

A, quod Dame Prudence, ye sayn your will and as you liketh; but in no cas of the world a man shulde not don outrage ne excesse, for to vengen him. For Cassiodore sayth, that as evil doth he that vengeth him by outrage, as he that doth the outrage. And therfore ye shuln venge you after the ordre of right, that is to sayn, by the lawe, and not by excesse, ne by outrage. And also if ye wol venge you of the outrage of youre adversaries, in other manere than right commaundeth, ye sinnen. And therfore sayth Senek, that a man shal never venge shrewednesse by shrewednesse. And if ye say that right axeth a man to defende violence by violence, and fighting by fighting: certes ye say soth, whan the defence is don withouten intervalle, or withouten tarying or delay, for to defende him, and not for to venge. And it behoveth, that a man putte swiche attemperaunce in his defence, that men have no cause ne mater

to repreve him, that defendeth him, of outrage and excesse, for elles were it againe reson. Parde ye knowen wel, that ye maken no defence as now, for to defende you, but for to venge you: and so sheweth it, that ye han no will to do youre dede attemprely: and therfore me thinketh that patience is good. For Salomon sayth, that he that is not patient, shal have gret harme.

Certes, quod Melibee, I graunte you, that whan a man is impatient and wrothe of that that toucheth him not, and that apperteineth not unto him, though it harme him it is no wonder. For the lawe saith, that he is coupable that entremeteth or medleth with swiche thing, as apperteineth not unto him. And Salomon saith, that he that entremeteth of the noise or strif of another man, is like to him that taketh a straunge hound by the eres: for right as he that taketh a straunge hound by the eres is otherwhile bitten with the hound, right in the same wise, it is reson that he have harme, that by his impatience medleth him of the noise of another man, wheras it apperteineth not unto him. But ye knowe wel, that this dede, that is to sayn, my greef and my disese, toucheth me right nigh. And therfore though I be wroth and impatient, it is no mervaille: and (saving your grace) I cannot see that it might gretly harme me, though I took vengeaunce, for I am richer and more mighty than min enemies ben: and wel knowe ye, that by money and by having grete possessions, ben alle thinges of this world governed. And Salomon sayth, that alle thinges obeye to money.

Whan Prudence had herd hire husbond avaunte him of his richesse and of his money, dispreising the power of his adversaries, she spake and sayd in this wise: Certes, dere Sire, I graunte you that ye ben riche and mighty, and that richesses ben good to hem that han wel ygeten hem, and that wel conne usen hem. For right as the body of a man may not liven withouten soul, no more may it liven withouten temporel goodes, and by richesses may a man gete him grete frendes. And therfore sayth Pamphilus: If a netherdes doughter (he sayth) be riche, she may chese of a thousand men, which she wol take to hire husbond: for of a thousand men on wol not forsaken hire ne refusen hire. And this Pamphilus saith also: If thou be right happy, that is to sayn, if thou be right riche, thou shalt finde a gret nombre of felawes and frendes; and if thy fortune chaunge, that thou wexe poure, farewel frendshipe and felawshipe, for thou shalt be al allone withouten any compaignie, but if it be the compaignie of poure folk. And yet sayth this Pamphilus moreover, that they that ben bond and thralle of linage, shuln be made worthy and noble by richesses. And right so as by richesses ther comen many goodes, right so by poverte come ther many harmes and eviles: for gret poverte constreineth a man to do many eviles. And therfore clepeth Cassiodore poverte the moder of ruine, that is to sayn, the moder of overthrowing or falling doun. And therfore sayth Piers Alphonse: on of the gretest adversitees of this world, is whan a free man by kinde, or of birthe, is constreined by poverte to eten the almesse of his enemie. And the same sayth Innocent in on of his bookes: he sayth, that sorweful and mishappy is the condition of a poure begger, for if he axe not his mete, he dieth for hunger, and if he axe, he dieth for shame: and algates necessitee constreineth him to axe. And therfore sayth Salomon, that better it is to die, than for to have swiche poverte. And as the same Salomon sayth: Better it is to die of bitter deth, than for to liven in swiche wise. By thise resons that I have said unto you, and by many other resons that I coude saye, I graunte you that richesses ben good to hem that wel geten hem, and to hem that wel usen tho richesses: and therfore wol I shewe you how ye shuln behave you in gadering of youre richesses, and in what manere ye shuln usen hem.

First, ye shuln geten hem withouten gret desir, by good leiser, sokingly, and not over hastifly, for a man that is to desiring to gete richesses, abandoneth him first to thefte and to alle other eviles. And therfore sayth Salomon: He that hasteth him to besily to wexe riche, he shal be non innocent. He sayth also, that the richesse that hastily cometh to a man, sone and lightly goeth and passeth from a man, but that richesse that cometh litel and litel, wexeth alway and multiplieth. And, Sire, ye shulen gete richesses by youre wit and by youre travaille, unto your profite, and that withouten wrong or harme doing to any other persone. For the lawe sayth: Ther maketh no man himself riche, if he do harme to another wight; this is to say, that nature defendeth and forbedeth by right, that no man make himself riche, unto the harme of another persone. And Tullius sayth, that no sorwe, ne no drede of deth, ne nothing that may falle unto a man, is so muchel ageins nature, as a man to encrese his owen profite, to harme of another man. And though the grete men and the mighty men geten richesses more lightly than thou, yet shalt thou not ben idel ne slowe to do thy profite, for thou shalt in alle wise flee idelnesse. For Salomon sayth, that idelnesse techeth a man to do many eviles. And the same Salomon sayth, that he that travailleth and besieth him to tillen his lond, shal ete bred: but he that is idel, and casteth him to no besinesse ne occupation, shal falle into poverte, and die for hunger. And he that is idel and slow, can never find covenable time for to do his profite. For ther is a versifiour sayth, that the idel man excuseth him in Winter, because of the grete cold, and in Summer by encheson of the hete. For thise causes, sayth Caton, waketh, and enclineth you not over muchel to slepe, for over muchel reste norisheth and causeth many vices. And therfore sayth Seint Jerome; Doeth som good dedes, that the devil which is oure enemie, ne finde you not unoccupied, for the devil ne taketh not lightly unto his werking swiche as he findeth occupied in goode werkes.

Than thus in geting richesses ye musten flee idelnesse. And afterward ye shuln usen the richesses, which ye han geten by youre wit and by youre travaille, in swiche manere, that men holde you not to scarce ne to sparing, ne foollarge, that is to say, over large a spender: for right as men blamen an avaricious man, because of his scarcitee and chincherie, in the same wise is he to blame, that spendeth over largely. And therfore saith Caton: Use (sayth he) the richesses that thou hast ygeten in swiche manere, that men have no matere ne cause to calle thee nother wretche ne chinche: for it is a gret shame to a man to have a poure herte and a riche purse. He sayth also: the goodes that thou hast ygeten,

use hem by mesure, that is to sayn, spende mesurably; for they that folily wasten and dispenden the goodes that they han, whan they han no more propre of hir owen, than they shapen hem to take the goodes of another man. I say than that ye shuln flee avarice, using youre richesses in swiche manere, that men sayn not that your richesses ben yberied, but that ye have hem in youre might, and in youre welding. For a wise man repreveth the avaricious man, and sayth thus in two vers. Wherto and why berieth a man his goodes by his gret avarice, and knoweth wel, that nedes must he die, for deth is the end of every man, as in this present lif? and for what cause or encheson joineth he him, or knitteth he him so fast unto his goodes, that alle his wittes mown not disseveren him, or departen him from his goodes, and knoweth wel, or oughte to knowe, that whan he is ded, he shal nothing bere with him out of this world? And therfore sayth Seint Augustine, that the avaricious man is likened unto helle, that the more it swalweth, the more desir it hath to swalwe and devoure. And as wel as ye wolde eschue to be called an avaricious man or chinche, as wel shulde ye kepe you and governe you in swiche a wise, that men calle you not fool-large. Therfore saith Tullius: The goodes of thin hous ne shulde not ben hid ne kept so close, but that they might ben opened by pitee and debonairetee; that is to sayn, to yeve hem part that han gret nede; ne thy goodes shulden not ben so open, to be every mannes goodes. Afterward, in geting of youre richesses, and in using of hem, ye shuln alway have three thinges in youre herte, that is to say, oure Lord God, conscience, and good name. First, ye shuln have God in youre herte, and for no richesse ye shuln do no thing, which may in any manere displese God that is your creatour and maker. For after the word of Salomon, it is better to have a litel good with love of God, than to have muchel good, and lese the love of his Lord God. And the Prophete sayth, That better it is to ben a good man, and have litel good and tresor, than to be holden a shrewe, and have grete richesses. And yet I say forthermore, that ye shulden alway do youre besinesse to gete you richesses, so that ye gete hem with good conscience. And the Apostle sayth, that ther n'is thing in this world of which we shulden have so gret joye, as whan oure conscience bereth us good witnesse. And the wise man sayth: The substaunce of a man is ful good, whan sinne is not in mannes conscience. Afterward, in geting of youre richesses, and in using of hem, ye must have gret besinesse and gret diligence, that youre good name be alway kept and conserved. For Salomon sayth, that beter it is, and more it availeth a man to have a good name, than for to have grete richesses: and therfore he sayth in another place: Do grete diligence (saith Salomon) in keping of thy frendes, and of thy good name, for it shal lenger abide with thee, than any tresor, be it never so precious. And certes, he shulde not be called a Gentilman, that after God and good conscience, alle thinges left, ne doth his diligence and besinesse, to kepen his good name. And Cassiodore sayth, that it is a signe of a gentil herte, whan a man loveth and desireth to have a good name. And therfore sayth Seint Augustine, that ther ben two thinges that arn right necessarie and nedeful; and that is good conscience, and good los; that is to sayn, good conscience to thin owen persone inward, and good los for thy neighebour outward. And he that trosteth him so muchel in his good conscience, that he despiseth and setteth at nought his good name or los, and recketh not though he kepe not his good name, n'is but a cruel cherl.

Sire, now have I shewed you how ye shulden do in geting richesses, and how ye shuln usen hem: and I see wel that for the trust that ye han in youre richesses, ye wiln meve werre and bataille. I conseille you that ye beginne no bataille ne werre, in trust of youre richesses, for they ne sufficen not werres to mainteine. And therfore sayth a Philosophre: That man that desireth and wol algates han werre, shal never have suffisaunce: for the richer that he is, the greter dispences must he make, if he wol have worship and victorie. And Salomon saith, that the greter richesses that a man hath, the mo dispendours he hath. And, dere Sire, al be it so, that for your richesses ye moun have muchel folk, yet behoveth it not, ne it is not good to beginne werre, wheras ye moun in other manere have pees, unto youre worship and profite: for the victorie of batailles that ben in this world, lith not in gret nombre or multitude of peple, ne in the vertue of man, but it lith in the will and in the hond of oure Lord God almighty. And therfore Judas Machabeus, which was Goddes knight, whan he shulde fighte again his adversarie, that hadde a greter nombre and a greter multitude of folk, and strenger than was the peple of this Machabee, yet he recomforted his litel compaignie, and sayde right in this wise: Al so lightly (sayde he) may our Lord God almighty yeve victorie to a fewe folk, as to many folk; for the victorie of a bataille cometh not by the gret nombre of peple, but it cometh from oure Lord God of heven. And, dere Sire, for as muchel as ther is no man certaine, if it be worthy that God yeve him victorie or not, after that Salomon sayth, therfore every man shulde gretly drede werres to beginne: and because that in batailles fallen many perils, and it happeth other while, that as sone is the gret man slain, as the litel man; and, as it is ywritten in the second book of Kinges, the dedes of batailles ben aventurous, and nothing certain, for as lightly is on hurt with a spere as another; and for ther is gret peril in werre; therfore shulde a man flee and eschue werre in as muchel as a man may goodly. For Salomon sayth: He that loveth peril, shal falle in peril.

After that dame Prudence had spoken in this manere, Melibee answerd and saide: I see wel, dame Prudence, that by youre faire wordes and by youre resons, that ye han shewed me, that the werre liketh you nothing: but I have not yet herd your conseil, how I shal do in this nede.

Certes, quod she, I conseille you that ye accorde with youre adversaries, and that ye have pees with hem. For Seint James sayth in his Epistle, that by concorde and pees, the smale richesses wexen grete, and by debat and discorde grete richesses fallen doun. And ye knowen wel, that on of the gretest and moste soveraine thing, that is in this world, is unitee and pees. And therfore sayde oure Lord Jesu Crist to his Apostles in this wise: Wel happy and blessed ben they that loven and purchasen pees, for they ben called the children of

God. A, quod Melibee, now see I wel, that ye loven not min honour, ne my worshipe. Ye knowen wel that min adversaries han begonne this debat and brige by hir outrage, and ye see wel, that they ne requeren ne prayen me not of pees, ne they axen not to be reconciled; wol ye than that I go and meke me, and obeye me to hem, and crie hem mercie? Forsoth that were not my worshipe: for right as men sayn, that overgret homlinesse engendreth dispreising, so fareth it by to gret humilitee or mekenesse.

Than began dame Prudence to make semblaunt of wrathe, and sayde: Certes, Sire, (sauf your grace) I love youre honour and youre profite, as I do min owen, and ever have don; ye, ne non other seyn never the contrary: and if I had sayde, that ye shulde han purchased the pees and the reconciliation, I ne hadde not muchel mistake me, ne sayde amis. For the Wise man sayth: The dissention beginneth by another man, and the reconciling beginneth by thyself. And the Prophete saith: Flee shrewednesse and do goodnesse; seke pees and folwe it, in as muchel as in thee is. Yet say I not, that ye shuln rather pursue to youre adversaries for pees, than they shuln to you: for I know wel that ye ben so hard-herted, that ye wol do nothing for me; and Salomon sayth: he that hath over hard an herte, atte laste he shal mishappe and mistide.

Whan Melibee had herd dame Prudence make semblaunt of wrath, he sayde in this wise. Dame, I pray you that ye be not displesed of thinges that I say, for I knowe wel that I am angry and wroth, and that is no wonder; and they that ben wroth, woten not wel what they don, ne what they sayn. Therfore the Prophete sayth, that troubled eyen han no clere sighte. But sayth and conseilleth me as you liketh, for I am redy to do right as ye wol desire. And if ye repreve me of my folie, I am the more holden to love you and to preise you. For Salomon saith, that he that repreveth him that doth folie, he shal find greter grace, than he that deceiveth him by swete wordes.

Than sayde Dame Prudence; I make no semblaunt of wrath ne of anger, but for youre grete profite. For Salomon saith: he is more worth, that repreveth or chideth a fool for his folie, shewing him semblaunt of wrath, than he that supporteth him and preiseth him in his misdoing, and laugheth at his folie. And this same Salomon saith afterward, that by the sorweful visage of a man, that is to sayn, by the sory and hevy countenance of a man, the fool correcteth and amendeth himself.

Than said Melibee; I shal not conne answere unto so many faire resons as ye putten to me and shewen: sayth shortly youre will and youre conseil, and I am al redy to performe and fulfille it.

Than Dame Prudence discovered all hire will unto him and saide: I conseille you, quod she, above alle thinges that ye make pees betwene God and you, and be reconciled unto him and to his grace, for as I have sayde you herebeforen, God hath suffered you to have this tribulation and disese for youre sinnes: and if ye do as I say you, God wol sende youre adversaries unto you, and make hem falle at youre feet, redy to do youre will and youre commaundements. For Salomon sayth; whan the condition of man is plesaunt and liking to God, he chaungeth the hertes of the mannes adversaries, and constreineth hem to besechen him of pees and of grace. And I pray you let me speke with your adversaries in privee place, for they shuln not knowe that it be of youre will or youre assent; and than, whan I knowe hir will and hir entente, I may conseille you the more seurely.

Dame, quod Melibeus, doth youre will and youre liking, for I putte me holly in youre disposition and ordinaunce.

Than Dame Prudence, when she sey the good will of hire husbond, delibered unto hire, and toke avis in hire self, thinking how she might bring this nede unto goode ende. And whan she sey hire time, she sent for thise adversaries to come unto hire in to a privee place, and shewed wisely unto hem the grete goodes that comen of pees, and the grete harmes and perils that ben in werre; and saide to hem, in a goodly manere, how that hem oughte have gret repentaunce of the injuries and wronges, that they hadden don to Melibeus hire lord, and unto hire and to hire doughter.

And whan they herden the goodly wordes of Dame Prudence, they weren so surprised and ravished, and hadden so gret joye of hire, that wonder was to telle. A, lady, quod they, ye have shewed unto us the blessing of swetenesse, after the saying of David the Prophete; for the reconciling, which we be not worthy to have in no manere, but we oughten requeren it with grete contrition and humilitee, ye of youre grete goodnesse have presented unto us. Now see we wel, that the science and conning of Salomon is ful trewe; for he saith, that swete wordes multiplien and encresen frendes, and maken shrewes to be debonaire and meke.

Certes, quod they, we putten oure dede, and all oure matere and cause, al holly in youre good will, and ben redy to obeye unto the speche and commaundement of my lord Melibeus. And therfore, dere and benigne lady, we praye you and beseche you as mekely as we conne and moun, that it like unto youre grete goodnesse to fulfille in dede youre goodly wordes. For we consideren and knowelechen, that we han offended and greved my lord Melibeus out of mesure, so fer forth, that we ben not of power to maken him amendes; and therfore we oblige and binde us and oure frendes, for to do all his will and his commaundements: but peraventure he hath swiche hevinesse and swiche wrath to us ward, because of oure offence, that he wol enjoynen us swiche a peine, as we moun not bere ne susteine; and therfore, noble ladie, we beseche to youre womanly pittee to take swiche avisement in this nede, that we, ne oure frendes, ben not disherited and destroied, thurgh oure folie.

Certes, quod Prudence, it is an hard thing and right perilous, that a man putte him all outrely in the arbitration and jugement, and in the might and power of his enemie; for Salomon sayth: leveth me, and yeveth credence to that that I shall say: to thy sone, to thy wif, to thy frend, ne to thy brother, ne yeve thou never might ne maistrie over thy body, while thou livest. Now, sith he defendeth that a man shulde not yeve to his brother, ne to his frend, the might of his body, by a strenger reson he defendeth and forbedeth a man to yeve himself to his enemy. And nathelea, I conseille you that ye mistruste not my lord: for I wot wel

and know veraily, that he is debonaire and meke, large, curteis, and nothing desirous ne coveitous of good ne richesse: for ther is nothing in this world that he desireth, save only worshipe and honour. Forthermore I know wel, and am right sure, that he shal nothing do in this nede withouten my conseil; and I shal so werken in this cas, that by the grace of oure Lord God ye shuln be reconciled unto us.

Than saiden they with o vois; worshipful lady, we putten us and oure goodes al fully in youre will and disposition, and ben redy to come, what day that it like unto youre noblesse to limite us or assigne us, for to make oure obligation and bond, as strong as it liketh unto youre goodnesse, that we moun fulfille the will of you and of my lord Melibee.

Whan Dame Prudence had herd the answer of thise men, she bad hem go agein prively, and she retourned to hire lord Melibee, and told him how she fond his adversaries ful repentaunt, knowleching ful lowly hir sinnes and trespas, and how they weren redy to suffren all peine, requering and preying him of mercy and pitee.

Than saide Melibee; he is wel worthy to have pardon and foryevenesse of his sinne, that excuseth not his sinne, but knowlecheth, and repenteth him, axing indulgence. For Senek saith; ther is the remission and foryevenesse, wher as the confession is; for confession is neighebour to innocence. And therefore I assente and conferme me to have pees, but it is good that we do nought withouten the assent and will of oure frendes.

Than was Prudence right glad and joyeful, and saide; certes, sire, ye han wel and goodly answerd: for right as by the conseil, assent, and helpe of your frendes, ye han be stired to venge you and make werre, right so withouten hir conseil shul ye not accord you, ne have pees with youre adversaries. For the lawe saith: ther is nothing so good by way of kinde, as a thing to be unbounde by him that it was ybounde.

And than Dame Prudence, withouten delay or tarying, sent anon hire messageres for hir kin and for hir olde frendes, which that were trewe and wise: and told hem by ordre, in the presence of Melibee, all the matere, as it is above expressed and declared; and preied hem that they wold yeve hir avis and conseil, what were best to do in this nede. And whan Melibeus frendes hadden taken hir avis and deliberation of the foresaid matere, and hadden examined it by gret besinesse and gret diligence, they yaven ful conseil for to have pees and reste, and that Melibee shulde receive with good herte his adversaries to foryevenesse and mercy.

And whan Dame Prudence had herd the assent of hire lord Melibee, and the conseil of his frendes, accord with hire will and hire entention, she was wonder glad in hire herte, and sayde: ther is an olde Proverbe, quod she, sayth, that the goodnesse that thou maist do this day, do it, and abide not, ne delay it not til to morwe: and therfore I conseille, that ye sende youre messageres, swiche as ben discrete and wise, unto youre adversaries, telling hem on youre behalf, that if they wol trete of pees and of accord, that they shape hem, withouten delay or tarying, to come unto us. Which thing parfourmed was indede. And whan thise trespasours and repenting folk of hir folies, that is to sayn, the adversaries of Melibee, hadden herd what thise messageres sayden unto hem, they weren right glade and joyeful, and answerden ful mekely and benignely, yelding graces and thankinges to hir lord Melibee, and to all his compagnie: and shopen hem withouten delay to go with the messageres, and obeye to the commaundement of hir lord Melibee.

And right anon they token hir way to the court of Melibee, and token with hem som of hir trewe frendes, to make feith for hem, and for to ben hir borwes. And whan they were comen to the presence of Melibee, he saide hem thise wordes: it stant thus, quod Melibee, and soth it is, that ye causeles, and withouten skill and reson, han don grete injuries and wronges to me, and to my wif Prudence, and to my doughter also, for ye han entred into myn hous by violence, and have don swiche outrage, that alle men knowen wel that ye han deserved the deth: and therfore wol I know and wete of you, whether ye wol putte the punishing and chastising, and the vengeaunce of this outrage, in the will of me and of my wif, or ye wol not.

Than the wisest of hem three answered for hem alle, and saide. Sire, quod he, we knowen wel, that we ben unworthy to come to the court of so gret a lord and so worthy as ye ben, for we han so gretly mistaken us, and han offended and agilte in swiche wise agein youre high lordshipe, that trewely we han deserved the deth; but yet for the grete goodnesse and debonairetee, that all the world witnesseth of youre persone, we submitten us to the excellence and benignitee of youre gracious lordshipe, and ben redy to obeye to alle youre comandements, beseeching you, that of youre merciable pitee ye wol considere oure grete repentance and lowe submission, and graunte us foryevenesse of oure outragious trespas and offence: for wel we knowen, that youre liberal grace and mercie stretchen hem forther into goodnesse, than don oure outragious giltes and trespas into wickednesse; al be it that cursedly and dampnably we han agilte again youre highe lordshipe.

Than Melibee toke hem up fro the ground ful benignely, and received hir obligations, and hir bondes, by hir othes upon hir plegges and borwes, and assigned hem a certain day to retourne unto his court for to receive and accept sentence and jugement, that Melibee wolde commande to be don on hem, by the causes aforesaid; which thinges ordeined, every man retourned to his hous.

And whan that Dame Prudence saw hire time, she freined and axed hire lord Melibee, what vengeance he thoughte to taken of his adversaries.

To which Melibee answerd, and saide: certes, quod he, I thinke and purpose me fully to disherite hem of all that ever they han, and for to putte hem in exile for ever.

Certes, quod Dame Prudence, this were a cruel sentence, and muchel agein reson. For ye ben riche ynough, and han no nede of other mennes good; and ye might lightly in this wise gete you a coveitous name, which is a vicious thing, and oughte to ben eschewed of every good man: for after the sawe of the Apostle, coveitise is rote of alle harmes. And therfore it were better for you to lese muchel good of your owen, than for to take of hir good in this manere. For better it is to lese good with worship, than to winne good with vilanie and shame. And every man oughte to do his diligence and his besinesse, to gete him a good

name. And yet shal he not only besie him in keping his good name, but he shal also enforcen him alway to do som thing, by which he may renovelle his good name: for it is written, that the olde good los, or good name, of a man is sone gon and passed, whan it is not newed. And as touching that ye sayn, that ye wol exile your adversaries, that thinketh me muchel agein reson, and out of mesure, considered the power that they han yeven you upon hemself. And it is written, that he is worthy to lese his privilege, that misuseth the might and the power that is yeven him. And I sette cas, ye might enjoine hem that peine by right and by lawe, (which I trowe ye mowe not do) I say, ye might not putte it to execution peraventure, and than it were like to retourne to the werre, as it was beforn. And therfore if ye wol that men do you obeisaunce, ye must deme more curteisly, that is to sayn, ye must yeve more esie sentences and jugements. For it is written: he that most curteisly commandeth, to him men most obeyen. And therfore I pray you, that in this necessitee and in this nede ye caste you to overcome youre herte. For Senek sayth, that he that overcometh his herte, overcometh twies. And Tullius saith: ther is nothing so commendable in a gret lord, as whan he is debonaire and meke, and appeseth him lightly. And I pray you, that ye wol now forbere to do vengeaunce, in swiche a manere, that your good name may be kept and conserved, and that men mown have cause and matere to preise you of pitee and of mercy; and that ye have no cause to repente you of thing that ye don. For Seneke saieth: he overcometh in an evil manere, that repenteth him of his victorie. Wherfore I pray you let mercy be in youre herte, to the effect and entente, that God almighty have mercy upon you in his last jugement: for seint James saith in his Epistle: jugement withoute mercy shal he do to him, that hath no mercy of another wight.

Whan Melibee had herd the grete skilles and resons of dame Prudence, and hire wise informations and techinges, his herte gan encline to the will of his wif, considering hire trewe entente, enforced him anon and assented fully to werken after hire conseil, and thanked God, of whom procedeth all goodnesse and all vertue, that him sent a wif of so gret discretion. And whan the day came that his adversaries shulde appere in his presence, he spake to hem ful goodly, and saide in this wise. Al be it so, that of youre pride and high presumption and folie, and of youre negligence and unconning, ye have misborne you, and trespased unto me, yet for as muchel as I see and behold youre grete humilitee, and that ye ben sory and repentant of youre giltes, it constreineth me to do you grace and mercy: wherfore I receive you into my grace, and foryeve you outrely alle the offences, injuries, and wronges, that ye have don agein me and mine, to this effect and to this ende, that God of his endeles mercie wol at the time of oure dying foryeve us oure giltes, that we han trespased to him in this wretched world: for douteles, if we be sory and repentant of the sinnes and giltes, which we han trespased in the sight of oure Lord God, he is so free and so merciable, that he wol foryeven us oure giltes, and bringen us to the blisse that never hath ende. *Amen.*

THE MONKES TALE.

THE MONKES PROLOGUE.

Whan ended was my tale of Melibee,
And of Prudence and hire benignitee,
Our hoste saide; as I am faithful man,
And by the precious *corpus Madrian*,
I hadde lever than a barell of ale,
That goode lefe my wif had herde this tale:
For she n'is no thing of swiche patience,
As was this Melibeus wif Prudence.
By Goddes bones, whan I bete my knaves,
She bringeth me the grete clobbed staves,
And cryeth; slee the dogges everich on,
And breke hem bothe bak and every bon.
And if that any neighebour of mine
Wol not in chirche to my wif encline,
Or be so hardy to hire to trespace,
Whan she cometh home she rampeth in my face,
And cryeth; false coward, wreke thy wif:
By *corpus Domini*, I wol have thy knif,
And thou shalt have my distaf, and go spinne.
Fro day til night right thus she wol beginne.
Alas, she saith, that ever I was yshape
To wed a milksop, or a coward ape,
That wol ben overladde with every wight!
Thou darst not stonden by thy wives right.
This is my lif, but if that I wol fight,
And out at dore anon I mote me dight,
Or elles I am lost, but if that I
Be like a wilde leon, fool-hardy.
I wote wel she wol do me slee som day
Som neighebour, and thanne go my way,
For I am perilous with knif in honde,
Al be it that I dare not hire withstonde:
For she is bigge in armes by my faith,
That shal he finde, that hire misdoth or saith.
But let us passe away fro this matere.
My lord the Monk, quod he, be mery of chere,
For ye shul telle a tale trewely.
Lo, Rouchester stondeth here faste by.
Ride forth, min owen lord, breke not our game.
But by my trouthe I can not telle youre name;
Whether shal I call you my lord Dan John,
Or Dan Thomas, or elles Dan Albon?
Of what hous be ye, by your fader kin?
I vow to God, thou hast a ful faire skin;
It is a gentil pasture ther thou gost;
Thou art not like a penaunt or a gost.
Upon my faith thou art som officer,
Som worthy sextein, or som celerer.

For by my fadres soule, as to my dome,
Thou art a maister, whan thou art at home;
No poure cloisterer, ne non novice,
But a governour bothe ware and wise,
And therwithal of braunes and of bones
A right wel faring persone for the nones.
I pray to God yeve him confusion,
That first thee brought into religion.
Thou woldest han ben a trede-foul a right,
Haddest thou as grete leve, as thou hast might,
To parfourme all thy lust in engendrure,
Thou haddest begeten many a creature.
Alas! why werest thou so wide a cope?
God yeve me sorwe, but, and I were pope,
Not only thou but every mighty man,
Though he were shore ful high upon his pan,
Shuld have a wif, for al this world is lorn;
Religion hath take up all the corn
Of treding, and we borel men ben shrimpes:
Of feble trees ther comen wretched impes.
This maketh that our heires ben so sclendre
And feble, that they moun not wel engendre.
This maketh that our wives wol assaye
Religious folk, for they moun better paye
Of Venus payementes than mowen we:
God wote, no lussheburghes payen ye.
But be not wroth, my lord, though that I play:
Ful oft in game a sothe have I herd say.
This worthy Monke toke all in patience,
And saide; I wol don all my diligence,
As fer as sounceth into honestee,
To tellen you a tale, or two or three.
And if you list to herken hiderward,
I wol you sayn the lif of Seint Edward;
Or elles tragedies first I wol telle,
Of which I have an hundred in my celle.
Tragedie is to sayn a certain storie,
As olde bookes maken us memorie,
Of him that stood in gret prosperitee,
And is yfallen out of high degree
In to miserie, and endeth wretchedly.
And they ben versified communly
Of six feet, which men clepen exametron:
In prose eke ben endited many on,
And eke in metre, in many a sondry wise.
Lo, this declaring ought ynough suffice.
Now herkeneth, if you liketh for to here.
But first I you beseche in this matere,
Though I by ordre telle not thise thinges,
Be it of popes, emperoures, or kinges,
After hir ages, as men written finde,
But telle hem som before and som behinde,
As it now cometh to my remembrance,
Have me excused of min ignorance.

THE MONKES TALE.

I wol bewaile in manere of tragedie
The harm of hem, that stode in high degree,
And fellen so, that ther n'as no remedie
To bring hem out of hir adversitee.
For certain whan that fortune list to flee,
Ther may no man of hire the cours withholde:
Let no man trust on blinde prosperitee;
Beth ware by thise ensamples trewe and olde.

Lucifer.

At Lucifer, though he an angel were
And not a man, at him I wol beginne.
For though fortune may non angel dere,
From high degree yet fell he for his sinne
Doun into helle, wheras he yet is inne.
O Lucifer, brightest of angels alle,
Now art thou Sathanas, that maist not twinne
Out of miserie, in which that thou art falle.

Adam.

Lo Adam, in the feld of Damascene
With Goddes owen finger wrought was he,
And not begeten of mannes sperme unclene,
And welte all Paradis saving o tree:
Had never worldly man so high degree
As Adam, til he for misgovernance
Was driven out of his prosperitee
To labour, and to helle, and to meschance.

Sampson.

Lo Sampson, which that was annunciat
By the angel, long or his nativitee:
And was to God Almighty consecrat,
And stode in noblesse while he mighte see:
Was never swiche another as was he,
To speke of strength, and therto hardinesse:
But to his wives tolde he his secree,
Thurgh which he slow himself for wretchednesse.

Sampson, this noble and mighty champion,
Withouten wepen, save his handes twey,
He slow and all to-rente the leon,
Toward his wedding walking by the wey:
His false wif coude him so plese, and pray,
Til she his conseil knewe; and she untrewe
Unto his foos his conseil gan bewray,
And him forsoke, and toke another newe.

Three hundred foxes toke Sampson for ire,
And all hir tayles he togeder bond:
And set the foxes tayles all on fire,
For he in every tayl had knit a brond.
And they brent all the cornes in that lond,
And all hir oliveres, and vines eke.
A thousand men he slow eke with his hond,
And had no wepen, but an asses cheke.

Whan they were slain, so thursted him, that he
Was wel nie lorne, for which he gan to preye,
That God wold on his peine han som pitee,
And send him drinke, or elles moste he deye:
And of this asses cheke, that was so dreye,
Out of a wang toth sprang anon a welle,
Of which he dranke ynough, shortly to seye.
Thus halp him God, as *Judicum* can telle.

By veray force at Gasa on a night,
Maugre the Philistins of that citee,
The gates of the toun he hath up plight,
And on his bak yearied hem hath he
High on an hill, wher as men might hem se.
O noble mighty Sampson, lefe and dere,
Haddest thou not told to women thy secree,
In all this world ne had ther ben thy pere.

This Sampson never sider drank ne wine,
Ne on his hed came rasour non ne shere,
By precept of the messager divine,
For all his strengthes in his heres were:

And fully twenty winter yere by yere
He hadde of Israel the governance :
But sone shal he wepen many a tere,
For women shuln him bringen to meschance.

Unto his lemman Dalida he told,
That in his heres all his strengthe lay,
And falsely to his fomen she him sold ;
And sleping in hire barme upon a day
She made to clip or shere his here away,
And made his fomen all his craft espien ;
And whan that they him fond in this array,
They bond him fast, and putten out his eyen.

But or his here was clipped or yshave,
Ther was no bond, with which men might him bind,
But now is he in prison in a cave,
Wheras they made him at the querne grinde.
O noble Sampson, strongest of mankind,
O whilom juge in glory and richesse,
Now mayest thou wepen with thin eyen blind,
Sith thou fro wele art falle in wretchednesse.

The ende of this caitif was, as I shal seye :
His fomen made a feste upon a day,
And made him as hir fool before hem pleye :
And this was in a temple of gret array.
But at the last he made a foule affray,
For he two pillers shoke, and made hem falle,
And doun fell temple and all, and ther it lay,
And slow himself, and eke his fomen alle.

This is to sayn, the princes everich on,
And eke three thousand bodies were ther slain
With falling of the gret temple of ston.
Of Sampson now wol I no more sain :
Beth ware by this ensample old and plain,
That no men tell hir conseil to hir wives
Of swiche thing, as they wold han secree fain,
If that it touch hir limmes or hir lives.

Hercules.

Of Hercules the soveraine conquerour
Singen his werkes laude, and high renoun ;
For in his time of strength he was the flour.
He slow and raft the skinne of the leon ;
He of Centaures laid the bost adoun ;
He Harpies slow, the cruel briddes felle ;
He golden apples raft fro the dragon ;
He drow out Cerberus the hound of helle.

He slow the cruel tirant Busirus,
And made his hors to fret him flesh and bon ;
He slow the firy serpent venemous ;
Of Achelous two hornes brake he on.
And he slow Cacus in a cave of ston ;
He slow the geaunt Anteus the strong ;
He slow the grisely bore, and that anon ;
And bare the hevene on his nekke long.

Was never wight sith that the world began,
That slow so many monstres, as did he ;
Thurghout the wide world his name ran,
What for his strength, and for his high bountee ;
And every reaume went he for to see,
He was so strong that no man might him let ;
At bothe the worldes endes, saith Trophee,
In stede of boundes he a piller set.

A lemman had this noble champion,
That hightе Deianire, as fresh as May ;
And as thise clerkes maken mention,
She hath him sent a sherte fresh and gay :
Alas ! this sherte, alas and wala wa !
Evenimed was sotilly withalle,
That or that he had wered it half a day,
It made his flesh all from his bones falle.

But natheles som clerkes hire excusen
By on, that hightе Nessus, that it maked ;
Be as may be, I wol hire not accusen ;
But on his bak this sherte he wered al naked,
Til that his flesh was for the venim blaked :
And whan he saw non other remedie ;
In hote coles he hath himselven raked,
For with no venime deigned him to die.

Thus starf this worthy mighty Hercules.
Lo, who may trust on fortune any throw !
For him that folweth all this world of pres,
Or he be ware, is oft ylaid ful lowe :
Ful wise is he, that can himselven knowe.
Beth ware, for whan that fortune list to glose,
Than waiteth she hire man to overthrowe
By swiche a way, as he wold lest suppose.

Nabuchodonosor.

The mighty trone, the precious tresor,
The glorious sceptre, and real majestee,
That hadde the king Nebuchodonosor,
With tonge unnethes may descrived be.
He twies wan Jerusalem the citee,
The vessell of the temple he with him ladde ;
At Babiloine was his soveraine see,
In which his glorie and his delit he hadde.

The fayrest children of the blood real
Of Israel he did do gelde anon,
And maked eche of hem to ben his thral.
Amonges other Daniel was on,
That was the wisest child of everich on ;
For he the dremes of the king expouned,
Wher as in Caldee clerk ne was ther non,
That wiste to what fin his dremes souned.

This proude king let make a statue of gold
Sixty cubites long, and seven in brede,
To which image bothe yonge and old
Commanded he to loute, and have in drede,
Or in a fourneis, ful of flames rede,
He shuld be brent, that wolde not obeye :
But never wold assenten to that dede
Daniel, ne his yonge felawes tweye.

This king of kinges proud was and elat ;
He wend that God, that sit in majestee,
Ne might him nat bereve of his estat :
But sodenly he lost his dignitee,
And like a best him semed for to be,
And ete hey as an oxe, and lay therout :
In rain with wilde bestes walked he,
Til certain time was ycome about.

And like an egles fethers wex his heres,
His neyles like a briddes clawes were,
Til God relesed him at certain yeres,
And yaf him wit, and than with many a tere

He thanked God, and ever his lif in fere
Was he to don amis, or more trespace :
And til that time he laid was on his bere,
He knew that God was ful of might and grace.

BALTHASAR.

His sone, which that highte Balthasar,
That held the regne after his fadres day,
He by his fader coude not beware,
For proude he was of herte, and of array :
And eke an ydolaster was he ay.
His high estat assured him in pride ;
But fortune cast him doun (and ther he lay)
And sodenly his regne gan devide.

A feste he made unto his lordes alle
Upon a time, and made hem blithe be,
And than his officeres gan he calle ;
Goth, bringeth forthe the vessels, quod he,
Which that my fader in his prosperitee
Out of the temple of Jerusalem beraft,
And to our highe goddes thanke we
Of honour, that our eldres with us laft.

His wif, his lordes, and his concubines
Ay dronken, while hir appetites last,
Out of thise noble vessels sondry wines.
And on a wall this king his eyen cast,
And saw an hand armles, that wrote ful fast,
For fere of whiche he quoke, and siked sore.
This hand, that Balthasar so sore agast,
Wrote *Mane techel phares*, and no more.

In al that lond Magicien was non,
That coud expounen what this lettre ment,
But Daniel expouned it anon,
And said ; O king, God to thy fader lent
Glorie and honour, regne, tresour, and rent ;
And he was proud, and nothing God ne dradde ;
And therfore God gret wreche upon him sent,
And him beraft the regne that he hadde.

He was out cast of mannes compagnie,
With asses was his habitation ;
And ete hey, as a best, in wete and drie,
Til that he knew by grace and by reson,
That God of heven hath domination
Over every regne, and every creature :
And than had God of him compassion,
And him restored his regne and his figure.

Eke thou, that art his sone, art proud also,
And knowest all thise thinges veraily ;
And art rebel to God, and art his fo.
Thou dranke eke of his vessels boldely,
Thy wif eke, and thy wenches sinfully
Dranke of the same vessels sondry wines,
And heried false goddes cursedly,
Therfore to thee yshapen ful gret pine is.

This hand was sent fro God, that on the wall
Wrote *Mane techel phares*, trusteth me ;
Thy regne is don, thou weyest nought at all ;
Divid. d is thy regne, and it shal be
To Medes and to Perses yeven, quod he.
And thilke same night this king was slawe ;
And Darius occupied his degree,
Though he therto had neither right ne lawe.

Lordinges, ensample hereby moun ye take,
How that in lordship is no sikernesse :
For whan that fortune wol a man forsake,
She bereth away his regne and his richesse,
And eke his frendes, bothe more and lesse.
For what man that hath frendes thurgh fortune,
Mishap wol make hem enemies, I gesse.
This proverbe is ful soth, and ful commune.

ZENOBIA.

Zenobia, of Palmerie the quene,
(As writen Persiens of hire noblesse)
So worthy was in armes, and so kene,
That no wight passed hire in hardinesse,
Ne in linage, ne in other gentillesse.
Of kinges blood of Perse is she descended ;
I say not that she hadde most fairenesse,
But of hire shape she might not ben amended.

From hire childhode I finde that she fledde
Office of woman, and to wode she went ;
And many a wilde hartes blood she shedde
With arwes brode that she to hem sent ;
She was so swift, that she anon hem hent.
And whan that she was elder, she wold kille
Leons, lepards, and beres al to-rent,
And in hire armes weld hem at hire wille.

She dorst the wilde bestes dennes seke,
And rennen in the mountaignes all the night,
And slepe under the bush ; and she coud eke
Wrastlen by veray force and veray might
With any yong man, were he never so wight ;
Ther mighte nothing in hire armes stonde ;
She kept hire maidenhode from every wight,
To no man deigned hire for to be bonde.

But at the last hire frendes han hire maried
To Odenate, a prince of that contree ;
Al were it so, that she hem longe taried.
And ye shul understonden, how that he
Hadde swiche fantasies as hadde she ;
But natheles, whan they were knit in fere,
They lived in joye, and in felicitee,
For eche of hem had other lefe and dere.

Save o thing, that she n'olde never assente,
By no way, that he shulde by hire lie
But ones, for it was hire plaine entente
To have a childe, the world to multiplie :
And al so sone as that she might espie,
That she was not with childe with that dede,
Than would she suffer him don his fantasie
Eftsone, and not but ones out of drede.

And if she were with child at thilke cast,
No more shuld he playen thilke game
Till fully fourty dayes weren past :
Than wold she ones suffre him do the same.
Al were this Odenate wild or tame,
He gate no more of hire, for thus she sayde,
It was to wives lecherie and shame,
In other cas if that men with hem playde.

Two sones by this Odenate had she,
The which she kept in vertue and lettrure.
But now unto our tale turne we :
I say, so worshipful a creature,

And wise therwith, and large with mesure,
So penible in the werre, and curteis eke,
Ne more labour might in werre endure,
Was non, though al this world men shulden seke.

Hire riche array ne mighte not be told,
As wel in vessell as in hire clothing:
She was al clad in pierrie and in gold,
And eke she lefte not for non hunting
To have of sondry tonges ful knowing,
Whan that she leiser had, and for to entend
To lernen bookes was all hire liking,
How she in vertue might hire lif dispend.

And shortly of this storie for to trete,
So doughty was hire husbond and eke she,
That they conquered many regnes grete
In the Orient, with many a faire citee,
Appertenaunt unto the majestee
Of Rome, and with strong hand held hem ful fast,
Ne never might hir fomen don hem flee,
Ay while that Odenates dayes last.

Hire batailles, who so list hem for to rede,
Againe Sapor the king, and other mo,
And how that all this processe fell in dede,
Why she conquered, and what title therto,
And after of hire mischefe and hire wo,
How that she was beseged, and ytake,
Let him unto my maister Petrark go,
That writeth ynough of this, I undertake.

Whan Odenate was ded, she mightily
The regnes held, and with hire propre hond
Agains hire fos she fought so cruelly,
That ther n'as king ne prince in all that lond,
That he n'as glad, if he that grace fond
That she ne wolde upon his lond werreye:
With hire they maden alliaunce by bond
To ben in pees, and let hire ride and pleye.

The emperour of Rome Claudius,
Ne, him beforn, the Romain Galien
Ne dorste never be so corageous,
Ne non Ermin, ne non Egiptien,
Ne Surrien, ne non Arabien
Within the feld ne dorste with hire fight,
Lest that she wold hem with hire hondes slen,
Or with hire meinie putten hem to flight.

In kinges habite went hire sones two,
As heires of hir fadres regnes alle,
And Heremanno and Timolao
Hir names were, as Persiens hem calle.
But ay fortune hath in hire hony galle:
This mighty quene may no while endure,
Fortune out of hire regne made hire falle
To wretchednesse, and to misaventure.

Aurelian, whan that the governance
Of Rome came into his hondes twey,
He shope upon this quene to do vengeance,
And with his legions he toke his way
Toward Zenobie, and shortly for to say,
He made hire flee, and atte last hire hent,
And fettred hire, and eke hire children tway,
And wan the lond, and home to Rome he went.

Amonges other thinges that he wan,
Hire char, that was with gold wrought and pierrie,
This grete Romain, this Aurelian
Hath with him lad, for that men shuld it see.
Beforen his triumphe walketh she
With gilte chaines on hire necke honging,
Crouned she was, as after hire degree,
And ful of pierrie charged hire clothing.

Alas fortune! she that whilom was
Dredeful to kinges and to emperoures,
Now guareth all the peple on hire, alas!
And she that helmed was in starke stoures,
And wan by force tounes stronge and toures,
Shal on hire hed now were a vitremite:
And she that bare the sceptre ful of floures,
Shal bere a distaf hire cost for to quite.

NERO.

Although that Nero were as vicious,
As any fend, that lith ful low adoun,
Yet he, as telleth us Suetonius,
This wide world had in subjectioun,
Both Est and West, South and Septentrioun.
Of rubies, saphires, and of perles white
Were all his clothes brouded up and doun,
For he in gemmes gretly gan delite.

More delicat, more pompous of array,
More proude, was never emperour than he;
That ilke cloth that he had wered o day,
After that time he n'olde it never see;
Nettes of gold threde had he gret plentee
To fish in Tiber, whan him list to play;
His lustes were as law, in his degree,
For fortune as his frend wold him obay.

He Rome brente for his delicacie;
The senatours he slow upon a day,
To heren how that men wold wepe and crie;
And slow his brother, and by his suster lay.
His moder made he in pitous array,
For he hire wombe let slitten, to behold
Wher he conceived was, so wala wa!
That he so litel of his moder told.

No tere out of his eyen for that sight
Ne came, but sayd, a faire woman was she.
Gret wonder is, how that he coud or might
Be domesman of hire dede beautee:
The wine to bringen him commanded he,
And dranke anon, non other wo he made.
Whan might is joined unto crueltee,
Alas! to depe wol the venime wade.

In youthe a maister had this emperour
To techen him lettrure and curtesie,
For of moralitee he was the flour,
As in his time, but if bookes lie.
And while this maister had of him maistrie,
He maked him so conning and so souple,
That longe time it was, or tyrannie,
Or any vice dorst in him uncouple.

This Seneka, of which that I devise,
Because Nero had of him swiche drede,
For he fro vices wold him ay chastise
Discretly, as by word, and not by dede,

Sire, he wold say, an emperour mote nede
Be vertuous, and haten tyrannie.
For which he made him in a bathe to blede
On bothe his armes, till he muste die.

This Nero had eke of a custumaunce
In youth ageins his maister for to rise;
Which afterward him thought a gret grevaunce,
Therfore he made him dien in this wise.
But natheles this Seneka the wise
Chees in a bathe to die in this manere,
Rather than han another turmentise:
And thus hath Nero slain his maister dere.

Now fell it so, that fortune list no lenger
The highe pride of Nero to cherice:
For though that he were strong, yet was she strenger.
She thoughte thus; by God I am to nice
To set a man, that is fulfilled of vice,
In high degree, and emperour him calle:
By God out of his sete I wol him trice,
Whan he lest weneth, sonest shal he falle.

The peple rose upon him on a night
For his defaute, and whan he it espied,
Out of his dores anon he hath him dight
Alone, and ther he wend han ben allied,
He knocked fast, and ay the more he cried,
The faster shetten they hir dores alle:
Tho wist he wel he had himself misgied,
And went his way, no lenger dorst he calle.

The peple cried and rombled up and doun,
That with his eres herd he how they sayde,
Wher is this false tyrant, this Neroun?
For fere almost out of his wit he brayde,
And to his goddes pitously he preide
For socour, but it mighte not betide:
For drede of this him thoughte that he deide,
And ran into a gardin him to hide.

And in this gardin fond he cherles tweye
That saten by a fire gret and red,
And to thise cherles two he gan to preye
To slen him, and to girden of his hed,
That to his body, whan that he were ded,
Were no despit ydon for his defame.
Himself he slow, he coud no better rede,
Of which fortune lough and hadde a game.

HOLOFERNES.

Was never capitaine under a king,
That regnes mo put in subjectioun,
Ne strenger was in feld of alle thing
As in his time, ne greter of renoun,
Ne more pompous in high presumptioun,
Than Holoferne, which that fortune ay kist
So likerously, and lad him up and doun,
Til that his hed was of, or that he wist.

Not only that this world had him in awe
For lesing of richesse and libertee;
But he made every man reneie his lawe.
Nabuchodonosor was God, sayd he;
Non other God ne shulde honoured be.
Ageins his heste ther dare no wight trespace,
Save in Bethulia, a strong citee,
Wher Eliachim a preest was of that place.

But take kepe of the deth of Holoferne:
Amid his host he dronken lay a night
Within his tente, large as is a berne;
And yet for all his pompe and all his might,
Judith, a woman, as he lay upright
Sleping, his hed of smote, and fro his tente
Ful prively she stale from every wight,
And with his hed unto hire toun she wente.

ANTIOCHUS.

What nedeth it of king Antiochus
To tell his high and real majestee,
His gret pride, and his werkes venimous?
For swiche another was ther non as he;
Redeth what that he was in Machabe.
And redeth the proud wordes that he seid,
And why he fell from his prosperitee,
And in an hill how wretchedly he deid.

Fortune him had enhaunsed so in pride,
That verailly he wend he might attaine
Unto the sterres upon every side,
And in a balaunce weyen eche mountaine,
And all the floodes of the see restreine:
And Goddes peple had he most in hate,
Hem wold he sleen in turment and in peine,
Wening that God ne might his pride abate.

And for that Nichanor and Timothee
With Jewes were venquished mightily,
Unto the Jewes swiche an hate had he,
That he bad greithe his char ful hastily,
And swore and sayde ful despitously,
Unto Jerusalem he wold eftsone
To wreke his ire on it ful cruelly,
But of his purpos was he let ful sone.

God for his manace him so sore smote,
With invisible wound, ay incurable,
That in his guttes carfe it so and bote,
Til thatte his peines weren importable;
And certainly the wreche was resonable,
For many a mannes guttes did he peine;
But from his purpos, cursed and damnable,
For all his smerte, he n'olde him not restreine:

But bade anon apparailen his host.
And sodenly, or he was of it ware,
God daunted all his pride, and all his bost;
For he so sore fell out of his chare,
That it his limmes and his skinne to-tare,
So that he neither mighte go ne ride;
But in a chaiere men about him bare,
Alle forbrused bothe bak and side.

The wreche of God him smote so cruelly,
That thurgh his body wicked wormes crept,
And therwithal he stanke so horribly,
That non of all his meinie that him kept,
Whether so that he woke or elles slept,
Ne mighte not of him the stinke endure.
In this mischiefe he wailed and eke wept,
And knew God, Lord of every creature.

To all his host, and to himself also
Ful wlatsom was the stinke of his careine;
No man ne mighte him beren to ne fro.
And in this stinke, and this horrible peine,

He starf ful wretchedly in a mountaine.
Thus hath this robbour, and this homicide,
That many a man made to wepe and pleine,
Swiche guerdon, as belongeth unto pride.

Alexander.

The storie of Alexandre is so commune,
That every wight, that hath discretioun,
Hath herd somwhat or all of his fortune.
This wide world, as in conclusioun,
He wan by strength, or for his high renoun
They weren glad for pees unto him sende.
The pride of man and bost he layd adoun,
Wher so he came, unto the worldes ende.

Comparison might never yet be maked
Betwix him and another conquerour,
For al this world for drede of him hath quaked;
He was of knighthode and of fredome flour;
Fortune him maked the heir of hire honour.
Save wine and women, nothing might asswage
His high entente in armes and labour,
So was he ful of leonin corage.

What pris were it to him, though I you told
Of Darius, and an hundred thousand mo,
Of kinges, princes, dukes, erles bold,
Which he conquered, and brought hem into wo?
I say, as fer as man may ride or go
The world was his, what shuld I more devise?
For though I wrote or told you ever mo
Of his knighthode, it mighte not suffice.

Twelf yere he regned, as saith Machabe;
Philippus sone of Macedoine he was,
That first was king in Grece the contree.
O worthy gentil Alexandre, alas
That ever shuld thee fallen swiche a cas!
Enpoisoned of thyn owen folke thou were;
Thy sis fortune hath turned into an as,
And yet for thee ne wept she never a tere.

Who shal me yeven teres to complaine
The deth of gentillesse, and of fraunchise,
That all this world welded in his demaine,
And yet him thought it mighte not suffice?
So ful was his corage of high emprise.
Alas! who shal me helpen to endite
False fortune, and poison to despise?
The whiche two of all this wo I wite.

Julius Cesar.

By wisdome, manhode, and by gret labour,
From humblehede to real majestee
Up rose he Julius the conquerour,
That wan all the occident, by lond and see,
By strengthe of hond, or elles by tretee,
And unto Rome made hem tributarie;
And sith of Rome the emperour was he,
Til that fortune wexe his adversarie.

O mighty Cesar, that in Thessalie
Ageins Pompeius father thin in lawe,
That of the orient had all the chivalrie,
As fer as that the day beginneth dawe,
Thou thurgh thy knighthode hast hem take and slawe,
Save fewe folk, that with Pompeius fledde,
Thurgh which thou put all the orient in awe,
Thanke fortune, that so wel thee spedde.

But now a litel while I wol bewaile
This Pompeius, this noble governour
Of Rome, which that fled at this bataille.
I say, on of his men, a false traitour,
His hed of smote, to winnen him favour
Of Julius, and him the hed he brought:
Alas, Pompeie, of the orient conquerour,
That fortune unto swiche a fin thee brought!

To Rome again repaireth Julius
With his triumphe laureat ful hie,
But on a time Brutus and Cassius,
That ever had of his high estat envie,
Ful prively had made conspiracie
Ageins this Julius in sotil wise:
And cast the place, in which he shulde die
With bodekins, as I shal you devise.

This Julius to the capitolie wente
Upon a day, as he was wont to gon,
And in the capitolie anon him hente
This false Brutus, and his other foon,
And stiked him with bodekins anon
With many a wound, and thus they let him lie:
But never gront he at no stroke but on,
Or elles at two, but if his storie lie.

So manly was this Julius of herte,
And so wel loved estatly honestee,
That though his dedly woundes sore smerte,
His mantel over his hippes caste he,
For no man shulde seen his privetee:
And as he lay of dying in a trance,
And wiste veraily that ded was he,
Of honestee yet had he remembrance.

Lucan, to thee this storie I recommende,
And to Sueton, and Valerie also,
That of this storie writen word and ende:
How that to thise gret conqueroures two
Fortune was first a frend, and sith a fo.
No man ne trust upon hire favour long,
But have hire in awaite for evermo;
Witnesse on all thise conqueroures strong.

Cresus.

The riche Cresus, whilom king of Lide,
Of whiche Cresus, Cirus sore him dradde,
Yet was he caught amiddes all his pride,
And to be brent men to the fire him ladde:
But swiche a rain doun from the welken shadde,
That slow the fire, and made to him escape:
But to beware no grace yet he hadde,
Til fortune on the galwes made him gape.

Whan he escaped was, he can not stint
For to beginne a newe werre again:
He wened wel, for that fortune him sent
Swiche hap, that he escaped thurgh the rain,
That of his foos he mighte not be slain;
And eke a sweven upon a night he mette,
Of which he was so proud, and eke so fain,
That in vengeance he all his herte sette.

Upon a tree he was, as that him thought,
Ther Jupiter him wesshe, both bak and side;
And Phebus eke a faire towail him brought
To drie him with, and therfore wex his pride.

And to his doughter that stood him beside,
Which that he knew in high science habound,
He bad hire tell him what it signified,
And she his dreme began right thus expound.

The tree (quod she) the galwes is to mene,
And Jupiter betokeneth snow and rain,
And Phebus with his towail clere and clene,
Tho ben the sonnes stremes, soth to sain:
Thou shalt anhanged be, fader, certain;
Rain shal thee wash, and sonne shal thee drie.
Thus warned him ful plat and eke ful plain
His doughter, which that called was Phanie.

Anhanged was Cresus the proude king,
His real trone might him not availle:
Tragedie is non other maner thing,
Ne can in singing crien ne bewaile,
But for that fortune all day wol assaille
With unware stroke the regnes that ben proude:
For whan men trusten hire, than wol she faille,
And cover hire bright face with a cloude.

Peter of Spaine.

O noble, o worthy Petro, glorie of Spaine,
Whom fortune held so high in majestee,
Wel oughten men thy pitous deth complaine.
Out of thy lond thy brother made thee flee,
And after at a sege by sotiltee
Thou were betraied, and lad unto his tent,
Wher as he with his owen hond slow thee,
Succeeding in thy regne and in thy rent.

The feld of snow, with th'egle of blak therin,
Caught with the limerod, coloured as the glede,
He brewed this cursednesse, and all this sinne;
The wicked neste was werker of this dede;
Not Charles Oliver, that toke ay hede
Of trouthe and honour, but of Armorike
Genilon Oliver, corrupt for mede,
Broughte this worthy king in swiche a brike.

Petro, King of Cypre.

O worthy Petro king of Cypre also,
That Alexandrie wan by high maistrie,
Ful many an hethen wroughtest thou ful wo,
Of which thin owen lieges had envie:
And for no thing but for thy chivalrie,
They in thy bed han slain thee by the morwe;
Thus can fortune hire whele governe and gie,
And out of joye bringen men to sorwe.

Barnabo Viscount.

Of Milane grete Barnabo Viscount,
God of delit, and scourge of Lumbardie,
Why shuld I not thin infortune account,
Sith in estat thou clomben were so high?
Thy brothers sone, that was thy double allie,
For he thy nevew was, and sone in lawe,
Within his prison made he thee to die,
But why, ne how, n'ot I that thou were slawe.

Hugelin of Pise.

Of the erl Hugelin of Pise the langour
Ther may no tonge tellen for pitee.
But litel out of Pise stant a tour,
In whiche tour in prison yput was he,
And with him ben his litel children three,
The eldest scarsely five yere was of age:
Alas! fortune, it was gret crueltee
Swiche briddes for to put in swiche a cage.

Dampned was he to die in that prison,
For Roger, which that bishop was of Pise,
Had on him made a false suggestion,
Thurgh which the peple gan upon him rise,
And put him in prison, in swiche a wise,
As ye han herd; and mete and drinke he had
So smale, that wel unnethe it may suffise,
And therwithal it was ful poure and bad.

And on a day befell, that in that houre,
Whan that his mete wont was to be brought,
The gailer shette the dores of the toure;
He hered it wel, but he spake right nought.
And in his herte anon ther fell a thought,
That they for hunger wolden do him dien;
Alas! quod he, alas that I was wrought!
Therwith the teres fellen fro his eyen.

His yonge sone, that three yere was of age,
Unto him said, fader, why do ye wepe?
Whan will the gailer bringen our potage?
Is ther no morsel bred that ye do kepe?
I am so hungry, that I may not slepe.
Now wolde God that I might slepen ever,
Than shuld not hunger in my wombe crepe;
Ther n'is no thing, sauf bred, that me were lever.

Thus day by day this childe began to crie,
Til in his fadres barme adoun it lay,
And saide; farewel, fader, I mote die;
And kist his fader, and dide the same day.
And whan the woful fader did it sey,
For wo his armes two he gan to bite,
And saide, alas! fortune, and wala wa!
Thy false whele my wo all may I wite.

His children wenden, that for hunger it was
That he his armes gnowe, and not for wo,
And sayden: fader, do not so, alas!
But rather ete the flesh upon us two.
Our flesh thou yaf us, take our flesh us fro,
And ete ynough: right thus they to him seide,
And after that, within a day or two,
They laide hem in his lappe adoun, and deide.

Himself dispeired eke for hunger starf.
Thus ended is this mighty Erl of Pise:
From high estat fortune away him carf.
Of this tragedie it ought ynough suffice;
Who so wol here it in a longer wise,
Redeth the grete poete of Itaille,
That highte Dante, for he can it devise
Fro point to point, not o word wol he faille.

THE NONNES PREESTES TALE.

THE NONNES PREESTES PROLOGUE.

Ho! quod the knight, good sire, no more of this:
That ye han said, it right ynough ywis,
And mochel more; for litel hevinesse
Is right ynough to mochel folk, I gesse.
I say for me, it is a gret disese,
Wher as men have ben in gret welth and ese,
To heren of hir soden fall, alas!
And the contrary is joye and gret solas,
As whan a man hath ben in poure estat,
And climbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,
And ther abideth in prosperitee:
Swiche thing is gladsom, as it thinketh me,
And of swiche thing were goodly for to telle.
Ye, quod our hoste, by Seint Poules belle,
Ye say right soth; this monk hath clapped loude:
He spake, how fortune covered with a cloude
I wote not what, and als of a tragedie
Right now ye herd: and parde no remedie
It is for to bewailen, ne complaine
That that is don, and als it is a paine,
As ye han said, to here of hevinesse.
Sire monk, no more of this, so God you blesse;
Your tale anoyeth all this compagnie;
Swiche talking is not worth a boterflie,
For therin is ther no disport ne game:
Therfore, sire monk, dan Piers by your name,
I pray you hertely, tell us somwhat elles,
For sikerly, n'ere clinking of your belles,
That on your bridel hange on every side,
By heven king, that for us alle dide,
I shuld er this have fallen doun for slepe,
Although the slough had ben never so depe:
Than hadde your tale all ben tolde in vain.
For certainly, as that thise clerkes sain,
Wher as a man may have non audience,
Nought helpeth it to tellen his sentence.
And wel I wote the substance is in me,
If any thing shal wel reported be
Sire, say somwhat of hunting, I you pray.
Nay, quod this Monk, I have no lust to play:
Now let another telle as I have told.
Than spake our hoste with rude speche and bold,
And sayd unto the Nonnes Preest anon,
Come nere, thou preest, come hither, thou Sire John,
Telle us swiche thing, as may our hertes glade.
Be blithe, although thou ride upon a jade.
What though thyn horse be bothe foule and lene,
If he wol serve thee, recke thee not a bene:
Loke that thyn herte be mery evermo.
Yes, hoste, quod he, so mote I ride or go,
But I be mery, ywis I wol be blamed.
And right anon his tale he hath attamed;
And thus he said unto us everich on,
This swete preest, this goodly man Sire John.

THE NONNES PREESTES TALE.

A POURE widewe somdel stoupen in age,
Was whilom dwelling in a narwe cotage,
Beside a grove, stonding in a dale.
This widewe, which I tell you of my tale,
Sin thilke day that she was last a wif,
In patience led a ful simple lif.
For litel was hire catel and hire rente:
By husbondry of swiche as God hire sente,
She found hireself, and eke hire doughtren two.
Three large sowes had she, and no mo:
Three kine and eke a sheep that highte Malle.
Ful sooty was hire boure, and eke hire halle,
In which she ete many a slender mele.
Of poinant sauce ne knew she never a dele.
No deintee morsel passed thurgh hire throte;
Hire diete was accordant to hire cote.
Repletion ne made hire never sike;
Attempre diete was all hire physike,
And exercise, and hertes suffisance.
The goute let hire nothing for to dance,
No apoplexie shente not hire hed.
No win ne dranke she, neyther white ne red:
Hire bord was served most with white and black,
Milk and broun bred, in which she fond no lack,
Seinde bacon, and somtime an ey or twey;
For she was as it were a maner dey.
A yerd she had, enclosed all about
With stickes, and a drie diche without,
In which she had a cok highte Chaunteclere,
In all the land of crowing n'as his pere.
His vois was merier than the mery orgon,
On masse daies that in the chirches gon.
Wel sikerer was his crowing in his loge,
Than is a clok, or any abbey orloge.
By nature he knew eche ascentioun
Of the equinoctial in thilke toun;
For whan degrees fiftene were ascended,
Than crew he, that it might not ben amended.
His combe was redder than the fin corall,
Enbattelled, as it were a castel wall.
His bill was black, and as the jet it shone;
Like asure were his legges and his tone;
His nailes whiter than the lily flour,
And like the burned gold was his colour.
This gentil cok had in his governance
Seven hennes, for to don all his plesance,
Which were his susters and his paramoures,
And wonder like to him, as of coloures.
Of which the fairest hewed in the throte,
Was cleped faire damoselle Pertelote.
Curteis she was, discrete, and debonaire,
And compenable, and bare hireself so faire,
Sithen the day that she was sevennight old,
That trewelich she hath the herte in hold
Of Chaunteclere, loken in every lith:
He loved hire so, that wel was him therwith.
But swiche a joye it was to here hem sing,
Whan that the brighte sonne gan to spring,

In swete accord : my lefe is fare in lond.
For thilke time, as I have understond,
Bestes and briddes couden speke and sing.
And so befell, that in a dawening,
As Chaunteclere among his wives alle
Sate on his perche, that was in the halle,
And next him sate his faire Pertelote,
This Chaunteclere gan gronen in his throte,
As man that in his dreme is dretched sore.
And whan that Pertelote thus herd him rore,
She was agast, and saide, herte dere,
What aileth you to grone in this manere ?
Ye ben a veray sleper, fy for shame.
And he answered and sayde thus ; madame,
I pray you, that ye take it not agrefe :
By God me mette I was in swiche mischefe
Right now, that yet min herte is sore afright.
Now God (quod he) my sweven recche aright,
And kepe my body out of foule prisoun.
Me mette, how that I romed up and doun
Within our yerde, wher as I saw a beste,
Was like an hound, and wold han made areste
Upon my body, and han had me ded.
His colour was betwix yelwe and red ;
And tipped was his tail, and both his eres
With black, unlike the remenant of his heres.
His snout was smal, with glowing eyen twey :
Yet for his loke almost for fere I dey :
This caused me my groning douteles.
Avoy, quod she, fy on you herteles.
Alas ! quod she, for by that God above
Now han ye lost myn herte and all my love ;
I cannot love a coward by my faith.
For certes, what so any woman saith,
We all desiren, if it mighte be,
To have an husbond, hardy, wise and free,
And secree, and non niggard ne no fool,
Ne him that is agast of every tool,
Ne non avantour by that God above.
How dorsten ye for shame say to your love,
That any thing might maken you aferde ?
Han ye no mannes herte, and han a berde ?
Alas ! and con ye ben agast of swevenis ?
Nothing but vanitee, god wote, in sweven is.
Swevenes engendren of repletions,
And oft of fume, and of complexions,
Whan humours ben to habundant in a wight.
Certes this dreme, which ye han met to-night,
Cometh of the grete superfluitee
Of youre rede *colera* parde,
Which causeth folk to dreden in hir dremes
Of arwes, and of fire with rede lemes,
Of rede bestes, that they wol hem bite,
Of conteke, and of waspes gret and lite ;
Right as the humour of melancolie
Causeth ful many a man in slepe to crie,
For fere of bolles, and of beres blake,
Or elles that blake devils wol hem take.
Of other humours coud I telle also,
That werken many a man in slepe moch wo :
But I wol passe, as lightly as I can.
Lo Caton, which that was so wise a man,
Said he not thus ? Ne do no force of dremes.
Now, Sire, quod she, whan we flee fro the bemes,
For Goddes love, as take som laxatif :
Up peril of my soule, and of my lif,
I conseil you the best, I wol not lie,
That both of coler, and of melancolie
Ye purge you ; and for ye shul not tarie,
Though in this toun be non apotecarie,
I shal myself two herbes techen you,
That shal be for your hele, and for your prow ;
And in our yerde, the herbes shall I finde,
The which han of hir propretee by kinde
To purgen you benethe, and eke above.
Sire, forgete not this for Goddes love ;
Ye ben ful colerike of complexion ;
Ware that the sonne in his ascention
Ne finde you not replete of humours hote :
And if it do, I dare wel lay a grote,
That ye shul han a fever tertiane,
Or elles an ague, that may be your bane.
A day or two ye shul han digestives
Of wormes, or ye take your laxatives,
Of laureole, centaurie, and fumetere,
Or elles of ellebor, that groweth there,
Of catapuce, or of gaitre-beries,
Or herbe ive growing in our yerd, that mery is :
Picke hem right as they grow, and ete hem in.
Beth mery, husbond, for your fader kin ;
Dredeth no dreme ; I can say you no more,
Madame, quod he, *grand mercy* of your lore.
But natheles, as touching dan Caton,
That hath of wisdome swiche a gret renoun,
Though that he bade no dremes for to drede,
By God, men moun in olde bookes rede,
Of many a man, more of auctoritee
Than ever Caton was, so mote I the,
That all the revers sayn of his sentence,
And han wel founden by experience,
That dremes ben significations
As wel of joye, as tribulations,
That folk enduren in this lif present.
Ther nedeth make of this non argument ;
The veray preve sheweth it indede.
On of the gretest auctours that men rede,
Saith thus ; that whilom twey felawes wente
On pilgrimage in a ful good entente ;
And happed so, they came into a toun,
Wher ther was swiche a congregatioun
Of peple, and eke so streit of herbergage,
That they ne founde as moche as a cotage,
In which they bothe might ylogged be :
Wherfore they musten of necessitee,
As for that night, departen compagnie ;
And eche of hem goth to his hostelrie,
And toke his logging as it wolde falle.
That on of hem was logged in a stalle,
Fer in a yerd, with oxen of the plough ;
That other man was logged wel ynough,
As was his aventure, or his fortune,
That us governeth all, as in commune.
And so befell, that, long or it were day,
This man met in his bed, ther as he lay,
How that his felaw gan upon him calle,
And said, alas ! for in an oxes stalle
This night shal I be mordred, ther I lie.
Now helpe me, dere brother, or I die ;
In alle haste come to me, he saide.
This man out of his slepe for fere abraide ;
But whan that he was waked of his slepe,
He turned him, and toke of this no kepe ;
Him thought his dreme was but a vanitee.
Thus twies in his sleping dremed he.
And at the thridde time yet his felaw
Came, as him thought, and said, I now am slaw :
Behold my blody woundes, depe and wide.
Arise up erly, in the morwe tide,
And at the West gate of the toun (quod he)
A carte ful of donge ther shalt thou see,

In which my body is hid prively.
Do thilke carte arresten boldely.
My gold caused my mordre, soth to sain.
And told him every point how he was slain
With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe.
And trusteth wel, his dreme he found ful trewe.
For on the morwe, as sone as it was day,
To his felawes inne he toke his way:
And whan that he came to this oxes stalle,
After his felaw he began to calle.
The hosteler answered him anon,
And saide, Sire, your felaw is agon,
As sone as day he went out of the toun.
This man gan fallen in suspecioun
Remembring on his dremes that he mette,
And forth he goth, no lenger wold he lette,
Unto the West gate of the toun, and fond
A dong carte, as it went for to dong lond,
That was arraied in the same wise
As ye han herde the dede man devise:
And with an hardy herte he gan to crie,
Vengeance and justice of this felonie:
My felaw mordred is this same night,
And in this carte he lith, gaping upright.
I crie out on the ministres, quod he,
That shulden kepe and reulen this citee:
Harow! alas! here lith myfelaw slain.
What shuld I more unto this tale sain?
The peple out stert, and cast the cart to ground,
And in the middel of the dong they found
The dede man, that mordred was all newe.
O blisful God, that art so good and trewe,
Lo, how that thou bewreyest mordre alway.
Mordre wol out, that see we day by day.
Mordre is so wlatsom and abhominable
To God, that is so just and resonable,
That he ne wol not suffre it hylled be:
Though it abide a yere, or two, or three,
Mordre wol out, this is my conclusioun.
And right anon, the ministres of the toun
Han hent the carter, and so sore him pined,
And eke the hosteler so sore engined,
That they beknew hir wickednesse anon,
And were anhanged by the necke bon.
Here moun ye see that dremes ben to drede.
And certes in the same book I rede,
Right in the nexte chapitre after this,
(I gabbe not, so have I joye and blis)
Two men that wold han passed over the see
For certain cause in to a fer contree,
If that the wind ne hadde ben contrarie,
That made hem in a citee for to tarie,
That stood ful mery upon an haven side.
But on a day, agein the even tide,
The wind gan change, and blew right as hem lest.
Jolif and glad they wenten to hir rest,
And casten hem ful erly for to saile;
But to that o man fell a gret mervaile.
That on of hem in sleping as he lay,
He mette a wonder dreme, again the day:
Him thought a man stood by his beddes side,
And him commanded, that he shuld abide,
And said him thus; if thou to-morwe wende,
Thou shalt be dreint; my tale is at an ende.
He woke, and told his felaw what he met,
And praied him his viage for to let,
As for that day, he prayd him for to abide.
His felaw that lay by his beddes side,
Gan for to laugh, and scorned him ful faste.
No dreme, quod he, may so my herte agaste,
That I wol leten for to do my thinges.
I sette not a straw by thy dreminges,
For swevens ben but vanitees and japes.
Men dreme al day of oules and of apes,
And eke of many a mase therwithal;
Men dreme of thing that never was, ne shal.
But sith I see that thou wolt here abide,
And thus forslouthen wilfully thy tide,
God wot it reweth me, and have good day.
And thus he took his leve, and went his way.
But or that he had half his cours ysailed,
N'ot I not why, ne what meschance it ailed,
But casuelly the shippes bottom rente,
And ship and man under the water wente
In sight of other shippes ther beside,
That with him sailed at the same tide.
And therfore, faire Pertelote so dere,
By swiche ensamples olde maist thou lere,
That no man shulde be to reccheles
Of dremes, for I say thee douteles,
That many a dreme ful sore is for to drede.
Lo, in the lif of seint Kenelme, I rede,
That was Kenulphus sone, the noble king
Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thing.
A litel or he were mordred on a day,
His mordre in his avision he say.
His norice him expouned every del
His sweven, and bade him for to kepe him wel
Fro treson; but he n'as but seven yere old,
And therfore litel tale hath he told
Of any dreme, so holy was his herte.
By God I hadde lever than my sherte,
That ye had red his legend, as have I.
Dame Pertelote, I say you trewely,
Macrobius, that writ the avision
In Affrike of the worthy Scipion,
Affirmeth dremes, and sayth that they ben
Warning of thinges, that men after seen.
And forthermore, I pray you loketh wel
In the olde Testament, of Daniel,
If he held dremes any vanitee.
Rede eke of Joseph, and ther shuln ye see
Wher dremes ben somtime (I say not alle)
Warning of thinges that shuln after falle.
Loke of Egipt the king, dan Pharao,
His baker and his boteler also,
Wheder they ne felten non effect in dremes.
Who so wol seken actes of sondry remes,
May rede of dremes many a wonder thing.
Lo Cresus, which that was of Lydie king,
Mette he not that he sat upon a tree,
Which signified he shuld anhanged be?
Lo hire Andromacha, Hectores wif,
That day that Hector shulde lese his lif,
She dremed on the same night beforne,
How that the lif of Hector shuld be lorne,
If thilke day he went into bataille:
She warned him, but it might not availle;
He went forth for to fighten natheles,
And was yslain anon of Achilles.
But thilke tale is al to long to telle,
And eke it is nigh day, I may not dwelle.
Shortly I say, as for conclusion,
That I shal han of this avision
Adversitee: and I say forthermore,
That I ne tell of laxatives no store,
For they ben venimous, I wot it wel:
I hem deffie, I love hem never a del.
But let us speke of mirthe, and stinte all this;
Madame Pertelote, so have I blis,

Of o thing God hath sent me large grace:
For whan I see the beautee of your face,
Ye ben so scarlet red about your eyen,
It maketh all my drede for to dien,
For, al so siker as *In principio,*
Mulier est hominis confusio.
(Madame, the sentence of this Latine is,
Woman is mannes joye and mannes blis.)
For whan I fele a-night your softe side,
Al be it that I may not on you ride,
For that our perche is made so narwe, alas!
I am so ful of joye and of solas,
That I deffie bothe sweven and dreme.
And with that word he flew doun fro the beme,
For it was day, and eke his hennes alle;
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,
For he had found a corn, lay in the yerd.
Real he was, he was no more aferd;
He fethered Pertelote twenty time,
And trade hire eke as oft, er it was prime.
He loketh as it were a grim leoun;
And on his toos he rometh up and doun,
Him deigned not to set his feet to ground:
He chukketh, whan he hath a corn yfound,
And to him rennen than his wives alle.
Thus real, as a prince is in his halle,
Leve I this Chaunteclere in his pasture;
And after wol I tell his aventure.
Whan that the month in which the world began,
That highte March, whan God first maked man,
Was complete, and ypassed were also,
Sithen March ended, thritty dayes and two,
Befell that Chaunteclere in all his pride,
His seven wives walking him beside,
Cast up his eyen to the brighte sonne,
That in the signe of Taurus hadde yronne
Twenty degrees and on, and somwhat more:
He knew by kind, and by non other lore,
That it was prime, and crew with blisful steven.
The sonne, he said, is clomben up on heven
Twenty degrees and on, and more ywis.
Madame Pertelote, my worldes blis,
Herkeneth thise blisful briddes how they sing,
And see the freshe floures how they spring;
Ful is min herte of revel, and solas.
But sodenly him fell a sorweful cas;
For ever the latter ende of joye is wo:
God wote that worldly joye is sone ago:
And if a rethor coude faire endite,
He in a chronicle might it saufly write,
As for a soveraine notabilitee.
Now every wise man let him herken me:
This story is al so trewe, I undertake,
As is the book of Launcelot du lake,
That women holde in ful gret reverence.
Now wol I turne agen to my sentence.
A col fox, ful of sleigh iniquitee,
That in the grove had wonned yeres three,
By high imagination forecast,
The same night thurghout the hegges brast
Into the yerd, ther Chaunteclere the faire
Was wont, and eke his wives, to repaire:
And in a bedde of wortes stille he lay,
Till it was passed undern of the day,
Waiting his time on Chaunteclere to falle:
As gladly don thise homicides alle,
That in await liggen to mordre men.
O false morderour, rucking in thy den!
O newe Scariot, newe Genelon!
O false dissimulour, o Greek Sinon,
That broughtest Troye al utterly to sorwe!
O Chaunteclere, accursed be the morwe,
That thou into thy yerd flew fro the bemes:
Thou were ful wel ywarned by thy dremes,
That thilke day was perilous to thee.
But what that God forewote most nedes be,
After the opinion of certain clerkes.
Witnesse on him, that any parfit clerk is,
That in scole is gret altercation
In this matere, and gret disputison,
And hath ben of an hundred thousand men.
But I ne cannot boult it to the bren,
As can the holy doctour Augustin,
Or Boece, or the bishop Bradwardin,
Whether that Goddes worthy foreweting
Streineth me nedely for to don a thing,
(Nedely clepe I simple necessitee)
Or elles if free chois be granted me
To do that same thing, or do it nought,
Though God forewot it, or that it was wrought;
Or if his weting streineth never a del,
But by necessitee condicionel.
I wol not han to don of swiche matere;
My tale is of a cok, as ye may here,
That took his conseil of his wif with sorwe
To walken in the yerd upon the morwe,
That he had met the dreme, as I you told.
Womennes conseiles ben ful often cold;
Womannes conseil brought us first to wo,
And made Adam fro paradis to go,
Ther as he was ful mery, and wel at ese.
But for I n'ot, to whom I might displese,
If I conseil of women wolde blame,
Passe over, for I said it in my game.
Rede auctours, wher they trete of swiche matere,
And what they sayn of women ye mown here.
Thise ben the Cokkes wordes, and not mine;
I can non harme of no woman devine.
Faire in the sond, to bath hire merily,
Lith Pertelote, and all hire susters by,
Agein the sonne, and Chaunteclere so free
Sang merier than the Mermaid in the see,
For Phisiologus sayth sikerly,
How that they singen wel and merily.
And so befell that as he cast his eye
Among the wortes on a boterflie,
He was ware of this fox that lay ful low.
Nothing no list him thanne for to crow,
But cried anon cok, cok, and up he sterte,
As man that was affraied in his herte.
For naturelly a beest desireth flee
Fro his contrarie, if he may it see,
Though he never erst had seen it with his eye.
This Chaunteclere, whan he gan him espie,
He wold han fled, but that the fox anon
Said; gentil sire, alas! what wol ye don?
Be ye affraid of me that am your frend?
Now certes, I were werse than any fend,
If I to you wold harme or vilanie.
I n'am not come your conseil to espie.
But trewely the cause of my coming
Was only for to herken how ye sing:
For trewely ye han as mery a steven,
As any angel hath, that is in heven;
Therwith ye han of musike more feling,
Than had Boece, or any that can sing.
My lord your fader (God his soule blesse)
And eke your moder of hire gentillesse
Han in myn hous yben, to my gret ese:
And certes, sire, ful fain wold I you plese.

But for men speke of singing, I wol sey,
So mote I brouken wel min eyen twey,
Save you, ne herd I never man so sing,
As did your fader in the morwening.
Certes it was of herte all that he song.
And for to make his vois the more strong,
He wold so peine him, that with both his eyen
He muste winke, so loud he wolde crien,
And stonden on his tiptoon therwithal,
And stretchen forth his necke long and smal.
And eke he was of swiche discretion,
That ther n'as no man in no region,
That him in song or wisdom mighte passe.
I have wel red in dan Burnel the asse
Among his vers, how that ther was a cok,
That, for a preestes sone yave him a knok
Upon his leg, while he was yonge and nice,
He made him for to lese his benefice.
But certain ther is no comparison
Betwix the wisdom and discretion
Of youre fader, and his subtilitee.
Now singeth, sire, for Seinte Charitee,
Let see, can ye your fader contrefete?
This Chaunteclere his winges gan to bete,
As man that coud not his treson espie,
So was he ravished with his flaterie.
Alas! ye lordes, many a false flatour
Is in your court, and many a losengeour,
That pleseth you wel more, by my faith,
Than he that sothfastnesse unto ypu saith.
Redeth Ecclesiast of flaterie,
Beth ware, ye lordes, of hire trecherie.
This Chaunteclere stood high upon his toos
Stretching his necke, and held his eyen cloos,
And gan to crowen loude for the nones:
And dan Russel the fox stert up at ones,
And by the gargat hente Chaunteclere,
And on his back toward the wood him bere.
For yet ne was ther no man that him sued.
O destinee, that maist not ben eschued!
Alas, that Chaunteclere flew fro the bemes!
Alas, his wif ne raughte not of dremes!
And on a Friday fell all this meschance.
O Venus, that art goddesse of plesance,
Sin that thy servant was this Chaunteclere,
And in thy service did all his powere,
More for delit, than world to multiplie,
Why wolt thou suffre him on thy day to die?
O Gaufride, dere maister soverain,
That, whan thy worthy king Richard was slain
With shot, complainedest his deth so sore,
Why ne had I now thy science and thy lore,
The Friday for to chiden, as did ye?
(For on a Friday sothly slain was he)
Than wold I shew you how that I coud plaine,
For Chauntecleres drede, and for his paine.
Certes swiche cry, ne lamentation
N'as never of ladies made, whan Ilion
Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streite swerd
Whan he had hent king Priam by the berd,
And slain him, (as saith us *Eneidos*)
As maden all the hennes in the cloos,
Whan they had seen of Chaunteclere the sight.
But soverainly dame Pertelote shright,
Ful louder than did Hasdruballes wif,
Whan that hire husbond hadde ylost his lif,
And that the Romaines hadden brent Cartage,
She was so ful of turment and of rage,
That wilfully into the fire she sterte,
And brent hireselven with a stedfast herte.
O woful hennes, right so criden ye,
As, whan that Nero brente the citee
Of Rome, cried the senatoures wives,
For that hir husbonds losten alle hir lives;
Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem slain.
Now wol I turne unto my tale again.
The sely widewe, and hire doughtren two,
Herden thise hennes crie and maken wo,
And out at the dores sterten they anon,
And saw the fox toward the wode is gon,
And bare upon his back the cok away:
They crieden, out! harow and wala wa!
A ha the fox! and after him they ran,
And eke with staves many another man;
Ran Colle our dogge, and Talbot, and Gerlond,
And Malkin, with hire distaf in hire hond;
Ran cow and calf, and eke the veray hogges
So fered were for berking of the dogges,
And shouting of the men and women eke,
They ronnen so, hem thought hir hertes breke.
They yelleden as fendes don in helle:
The dokes crieden as men wold hem quelle:
The gees for fere flewen over the trees,
Out of the hive came the swarme of bees,
So hidous was the noise, a *benedicite!*
Certes he Jakke Straw, and his meinie,
Ne maden never shoutes half so shrille,
Whan that they wolden any Fleming kille,
As thilke day was made upon the fox.
Of bras they broughten beemes and of box,
Of horn and bone, in which they blew and pouped,
And therwithal they shriked and they houped;
It semed, as that the heven shulde falle.
Now, goode men, I pray you herkeneth alle;
Lo, how fortune turneth sodenly
The hope and pride eke of hire enemy.
This cok that lay upon the foxes bake,
In all his drede, unto the fox he spake,
And sayde; sire, if that I were as ye,
Yet wolde I sayn, (as wisly God helpe me)
Turneth agein, ye proude cherles alle;
A veray pestilence upon you falle.
Now am I come unto the wodes side,
Maugre your hed, the cok shal here abide;
I wol him ete in faith, and that anon.
The fox answered, in faith it shal be don:
And as he spake the word, al sodenly
The cok brake from his mouth deliverly,
And high upon a tree he flew anon.
And whan the fox saw that the cok was gon,
Alas! quod he, o Chaunteclere, alas!
I have (quod he) ydon to you trespas,
In as moche as I maked you aferd,
Whan I you hente, and brought out of your yerd;
But, sire, I did it in no wikke entente:
Come doun, and I shal tell you what I mente.
I shal say sothe to you, God helpe me so.
Nay than, quod he, I shrewe us bothe two.
And first I shrewe myself, bothe blood and bones,
If thou begile me oftener than ones.
Thou shalt no more thurgh thy flaterie
Do me to sing and winken with myn eye.
For he that winketh, whan he shulde see,
Al wilfully, God let him never the.
Nay, quod the fox, but God yeve him meschance,
That is so indiscrete of governance,
That jangleth, whan that he shuld hold his pees.
Lo, which it is for to be recheles
And negligent, and trust on flaterie.
But ye that holden this tale a folie,

As of a fox, or of a cok, or hen,
Taketh the moralitee therof, good men.
For Seint Poule sayth, That all that writen is,
To our doctrine it is ywritten ywis.
Taketh the fruit, and let the chaf be stille.
Now, goode God, if that it be thy wille,
As sayth my Lord, so make us all good men;
And bring us to thy highe blisse. *Amen.*

Sire Nonnes Preest, our hoste sayd anon,
Yblessed be thy breche and every ston;
This was a mery tale of Chaunteclere.
But by my trouthe, if thou were seculere,
Thou woldest ben a tredefoule a right:
For if thou have corage as thou hast might,
Thee were nede of hennes, as I wene,
Ye mo than seven times seventene.
Se, whiche braunes hath this gentil preest,
So gret a necke, and swiche a large breest!
He loketh as a sparhauk with his eyen;
Him nedeth not his colour for to dien
With Brasil, ne with grain of Portingale.
But, sire, faire falle you for your tale.
And after that, he with ful mery chere
Sayd to another, as ye shulen here.

* * * * *

THE SECOND NONNES TALE.

The ministre and the norice unto vices,
Which that men clepe in English idelnesse,
That porter at the gate is of delices,
To eschuen, and by hire contrary hire oppresse,
That is to sain, by leful besinesse,
Wel oughte we to don al our entente,
Lest that the fend thurgh idelnesse us hente.

For he that with his thousand cordes slie
Continuelly us waiteth to beclappe,
Whan he may man in idelnesse espie,
He can so lightly cacche him in his trappe,
Til that a man be hent right by the lappe,
He n'is not ware the fend hath him in hond:
Wel ought us werche, and idelnesse withstond.

And though men dradden never for to die,
Yet see men wel by reson douteles,
That idelnesse is rote of slogardie,
Of which ther never cometh no good encrees,
And see that slouthe holdeth hem in a lees,
Only to slepe, and for to ete and drinke,
And to devouren all that other swinke.

And for to put us from swiche idelnesse,
That cause is of so gret confusion,
I have here don my feithful besinesse
After the Legende in translation
Right of thy glorious lif and passion,
Thou with thy gerlond, wrought of rose and lilie,
Thee mene I, maid and martir Seinte Cecilie.

And thou, that arte floure of virgines all,
Of whom that Bernard list so wel to write,
To thee at my beginning first I call,
Thou comfort of us wretches, do me endite
Thy maidens deth, that wan thurgh hire merite
The eternal lif, and over the fend victorie,
As man may after reden in hire storie.

Thou maide and mother, doughter of thy son,
Thou well of mercy, sinful soules cure,
In whom that God of bountee chees to won;
Thou humble and high over every creature,
Thou nobledest so fer forth our nature,
That no desdaine the maker had of kinde
His son in blood and flesh to clothe and winde.

Within the cloystre blisful of thy sides,
Toke mannes shape the eternal love and pees,
That of the trine compas Lord and gide is,
Whom erthe, and see, and heven out of relees
Ay herien; and thou, virgine wemmeles,
Bare of thy body (and dweltest maiden pure)
The creatour of every creature.

Assembled is in thee magnificence
With mercy, goodnesse, and with swiche pitee,
That thou, that art the sonne of excellence,
Not only helpest hem that praien thee,
But oftentime of thy benignitee
Ful freely, or that men thin helpe beseche,
Thou goest beforne, and art hir lives leche.

Now helpe, thou meke and blisful faire maide,
Me flemed wretch, in this desert of galle;
Thinke on the woman Cananee, that saide
That whelpes eten som of the cromes alle
That from hir Lordes table ben yfalle;
And though that I, unworthy sone of Eve,
Be sinful, yet accepteth my beleve.

And for that feith is ded withouten werkes,
So for to werken yeve me wit and space,
That I be quit from thennes that most derke is;
O thou, that art so faire and ful of grace,
Be thou min advocat in that high place,
Ther as withouten ende is songe Osanne,
Thou Cristes mother, doughter dere of Anne.

And of thy light my soule in prison light,
That troubled is by the contagion
Of my body, and also by the wight
Of erthly lust, and false affection:
O haven of refute, o salvation
Of hem that ben in sorwe and in distresse,
Now help, for to my werk I wol me dresse.

Yet pray I you that reden that I write,
Foryeve me, that I do no diligence
This ilke storie subtilly to endite.
For both have I the wordes and sentence
Of him, that at the seintes reverence
The storie wrote, and folowed hire legende,
And pray you that ye wol my werk amende.

First wol I you the name of Seinte Cecilie
Expoune, as men may in hire storie see :
It is to sayn in English, Hevens lilie,
For pure chastnesse of virginitee,
Or for she whitnesse had of honestee,
And grene of conscience, and of good fame
The swote savour, Lilie was hire name.

Or Cecilie is to sayn the way to blinde,
For she ensample was by good teching ;
Or elles Cecilie, as I writen finde,
Is joined by a maner conjoining
Of heven and *Lia*, and here in figuring
The heven is set for thought of holinesse,
And *Lia*, for hire lasting besinesse.

Cecilie may eke be sayd in this manere,
Wanting of blindnesse, for hire grete light
Of sapience, and for hire thewes clere.
Or elles lo, this maidens name bright
Of heven and *Leos* cometh, for which by right
Men might hire wel the heven of peple calle,
Ensample of good and wise werkes alle :

For *Leos* peple in English is to say ;
And right as men may in the heven see
The sonne and mone, and sterres every way,
Right so men gostly, in this maiden free
Sawen of faith the magnanimitee,
And eke the clerenesse hole of sapience,
And sondry werkes, bright of excellence.

And right so as thise Philosophres write,
That heven is swift and round, and eke brenning,
Right so was faire Cecilie the white
Ful swift and besy in every good werking,
And round and hole in good persevering,
And brenning ever in charitee ful bright :
Now have I you declared what she hight.

This maiden bright Cecile, as hire lif saith,
Was come of Romaines and of noble kind,
And from hire cradle fostred in the faith
Of Crist, and bare his Gospel in hire mind :
She never cesed, as I writen find,
Of hire prayere, and God to love and drede,
Beseeching him to kepe hire maidenhede.

And whan this maiden shuld until a man
Ywedded be, that was ful yonge of age,
Which that yeleped was Valerian,
And day was comen of hire marriage,
She ful devout and humble in hire corage,
Under hire robe of gold, that sat ful faire,
Had next hire flesh yclad hire in an haire.

And while that the organs maden melodie,
To God alone thus in hire hert song she ;
O Lord, my soule and eke my body gie
Unwemmed, lest that I confounded be.
And for his love that died upon the tree,
Every second or thridde day she fast,
Ay bidding in hire orisons ful fast.

The night came, and to bedde must she gon
With hire husbond, as it is the manere,
And prively she said to him anon ;
O swete and wel beloved spouse dere,
Ther is a conseil, and ye wol it here,
Which that right fayn I wold unto you saie,
So that ye swere, ye wol it not bewraie.

Valerian gan fast unto hire swere,
That for no cas, ne thing that mighte be,
He shulde never to non bewraien here ;
And than at erst thus to him saide she ;
I have an Angel which that loveth me,
That with gret love, wher so I wake or slepe,
Is redy ay my body for to kepe ;

And if that he may felen out of drede,
That ye me touch or love in vilanie,
He right anon wol sleen you with the dede,
And in your youthe thus ye shulden die.
And if that ye in clene love me gie,
He wol you love as me, for your clenenesse,
And shew to you his joye and his brightnesse.

This Valerian, corrected as God wold,
Answerd again, if I shal trusten thee,
Let me that angel seen, and him behold ;
And if that it a veray angel be,
Than wol I don as thou hast prayed me ;
And if thou love another man, forsothe
Right with this swerd than wol I slee you bothe.

Cecile answerd anon right in this wise ;
If that you list, the angel shul ye see,
So that ye trowe on Crist, and you baptise ;
Goth forth to Via Apia (quod she)
That fro this toun ne stant but miles three,
And to the poure folkes that ther dwellen
Say hem right thus, as that I shal you tellen.

Tell hem, that I Cecile you to hem sent
To shewen you the good Urban the old,
For secree nedes, and for good entent ;
And whan that ye Seint Urban han behold,
Tell him the wordes whiche I to you told ;
And whan that he hath purged you fro sinne,
Than shal ye seen that angel er ye twinne.

Valerian is to the place gon,
And right as he was taught by hire lerning,
He fond this holy old Urban anon
Among the seintes buriels louting :
And he anon withouten tarying
Did his message, and whan that he it tolde,
Urban for joye his hondes gan upholde.

The teres from his eyen let he falle ;
Almighty Lord, o Jesu Crist, quod he,
Sower of chast conseil, hierde of us alle,
The fruit of thilke seed of chastitee
That thou hast sow in Cecile, take to thee :
Lo, like a besy bee withouten gile
Thee serveth ay thin owen thral Cecile.

For thilke spouse, that she toke but newe
Ful like a fiers leon, she sendeth here
As meke as ever was any lambe to ewe.
And with that word anon ther gan apere
An old man, clad in white clothes clere,
That had a book with lettres of gold in hond,
And gan beforne Valerian to stond.

Valerian, as ded, fell doun for drede,
Whan he him saw ; and he up hent him tho,
And on his book right thus he gan to rede ;
On Lord, on faith, on God withouten mo,
On Cristendom, and fader of all also
Aboven all, and over all every wher :
Thise wordes all with gold ywriten were.

Whan this was red, than said this olde man,
Levest thou this thing or no? say ye or nay.
I leve all this thing, quod Valerian,
For sother thing than this, I dare wel say,
Under the heven no wight thinken may.
Tho vanished the olde man, he n'iste wher,
And pope Urban him cristened right ther.

Valerian goth home, and fint Cecilie
Within his chambre with an angel stonde:
This angel had of roses and of lilie
Corones two, the which he bare in honde,
And first to Cecile, as I understonde,
He yaf that on, and after gan he take
That other to Valerian hire make.

With body clene, and with unwemmed thought
Kepeth ay wel thise corones two, quod he,
From paradis to you I have hem brought,
Ne never mo ne shul they roten be,
Ne lese hir swete savour, trusteth me,
Ne never wight shal seen hem with his eye,
But he be chaste, and hate vilanie.

And thou, Valerian, for thou so sone
Assentedest to good conseil, also
Say what thee list, and thou shalt han thy bone.
I have a brother, quod Valerian tho,
That in this world I love no man so,
I pray you that my brother may have grace
To know the trouth, as I do in this place.

The angel sayd; God liketh thy request,
And bothe with the palme of martirdome
Ye shullen come unto his blisful rest.
And with that word, Tiburce his brother come.
And whan that he the savour undernome,
Which that the roses and the lilies cast,
Within his herte he gan to wonder fast,

And said; I wonder this time of the yere
Whennes that swete savour cometh so
Of roses and lilies, that I smelle here;
For though I had hem in min hondes two,
The savour might in me no deper go:
The swete smel, that in min herte I find,
Hath changed me all in another kind.

Valerian saide; two corones han we
Snow-white and rose-red, that shinen clere,
Which that thin eyen han no might to see:
And as thou smellest hem thurgh my praiere,
So shalt thou seen hem, leve brother dere,
If it so be thou wolt withouten slouthe
Beleve aright, and know the veray trouthe.

Tiburce answered; saiest thou this to me
In sothnesse, or in dreme herken I this?
In dremes, quod Valerian, han we be
Unto this time, brother min, ywis:
But now at erst in trouthe our dwelling is.
How wost thou this, quod Tiburce, in what wise?
Quod Valerian; that shal I thee devise.

The angel of God hath me the trouth ytaught,
Which thou shalt seen, if that thou wilt reney
The idoles, and be clene, and elles naught.
[And of the miracle of thise corones twey
Seint Ambrose in his preface list to sey;
Solempnely this noble doctour dere
Commendeth it, and saith in this manere.

The palme of martirdome for to receive,
Seinte Cecilie, fulfilled of Goddes yeft,
The world and eke hire chambre gan she weive;
Witnesse Tiburces and Ceciles shrift,
To which God of his bountee wolde shift
Corones two, of floures wel smelling,
And made his angel hem the corones bring.

The maid hath brought thise men to blisse above;
The world hath wist what it is worth certain
Devotion of chastitee to love.]
Tho shewed him Cecile all open and plain,
That all idoles n'is but a thing in vain,
For they ben dombe, and therto they ben deve,
And charged him his idoles for to leve.

Who so that troweth not this, a best he is,
Quod this Tiburce, if that I shal not lie.
And she gan kisse his brest whan she herd this,
And was ful glad he coude trouth espie:
This day I take thee for min allie,
Saide this blisful faire maiden dere;
And after that she said as ye may here.

Lo, right so as the love of Crist (quod she)
Made me thy brothers wif, right in that wise
Anon for mine allie here take I thee,
Sithen that thou wolt thin idoles despise.
Goth with thy brother now and thee baptise,
And make thee clene, so that thou maist behold
The angels face, of which thy brother told.

Tiburce answered, and saide; brother dere,
First tell me whither I shal, and to what man.
To whom? quod he; come forth with goode chere,
I wol thee lede unto the pope Urban.
To Urban? brother min Valerian,
Quod tho Tiburce, wilt thou me thider lede?
Me thinketh that it were a wonder dede.

Ne menest thou not Urban (quod he tho)
That is so often damned to be ded,
And woneth in halkes alway to and fro,
And dare not ones putten forth his hed?
Men shuld him brennen in a fire so red,
If he were found, or that men might him spie,
And we also, to bere him compagnie.

And while we seken thilke divinitee,
That is yhid in heven prively,
Algate ybrent in this world shuld we be.
To whom Cecile answered boldely;
Men mighten dreden wel and skilfully
This lif to lese, min owen dere brother,
If this were living only and non other.

But ther is better lif in other place,
That never shal be lost, ne drede thee nought:
Which Goddes sone us tolde thurgh his grace,
That fadres sone which alle thinges wrought;
And all that wrought is with a skilful thought,
The gost, that from the fader gan procede,
Hath souled hem withouten any drede.

By word and by miracle he Goddes sone,
Whan he was in this world, declared here,
That ther is other lif ther men may wone.
To whom answerd Tiburce; o suster dere,
Ne saidest thou right now in this manere,
Ther n'as but o God, lord in sothfastnesse,
And now of three how mayst thou bere witnesse?

That shall I tel, quod she, or that I go.
Right as a man hath sapiences three,
Memorie, engine, and intellect also,
So in o being of divinitee
Three persones mowen ther righte wel be.
Tho gan she him ful besily to preche
Of Cristes sonde, and of his peines teche,

And many pointes of his passion;
How Goddes sone in this world was withhold
To don mankinde pleine remission,
That was ybound in sinne and cares cold.
All this thing she unto Tiburce told,
And after this Tiburce in good entent,
With Valerian to pope Urban he went,

That thanked God, and with glad herte and light
He cristened him, and made him in that place
Parfite in his lerning and Goddes knight.
And after this Tiburce gat swiche grace,
That every day he saw in time and space
The angel of God, and every maner bone
That he God axed, it was sped ful sone.

It were ful hard by ordre for to sain
How many wonders Jesus for hem wrought.
But at the last, to tellen short and plain,
The sergeaunts of the toun of Rome hem sought,
And hem before Almache the prefect brought,
Which hem apposed, and knew all hire entent,
And to the image of Jupiter hem sent;

And said; who so wol nought do sacrifice,
Swap of his hed, this is my sentence here.
Anon thise martyrs, that I you devise,
On Maximus, that was an officere
Of the prefectes, and his corniculere,
Hem hent, and whan he forth the seintes lad,
Himself he wept for pitee that he had.

Whan Maximus had herd the seintes lore,
He gate him of the turmentoures leve,
And lad hem to his hous withouten more;
And with hir preching, or that it were eve,
They gonnen fro the turmentours to reve,
And fro Maxime, and fro his folk eche on
The false faith, to trowe in God alone.

Cecilie came, whan it was waxen night,
With preestes, that hem cristened all yfere;
And afterward, whan day was waxen light,
Cecilie hem said with a ful stedfast chere;
Now, Cristes owen knightes leve and dere,
Caste all away the werkes of derkenesse,
And armeth you in armes of brightnesse.

Ye han forsoth ydon a gret bataille;
Your cours is don, your faith han ye conserved;
Goth to the croune of lif that may not faille;
The rightful juge, which that ye han served,
Shal yeve it you, as ye han it deserved.
And whan this thing was said, as I devise,
Men ledde hem forth to don the sacrifice.

But whan they weren to the place ybrought,
To tellen shortly the conclusioun,
They n'olde encense, ne sacrifice right nought,
But on hir knees they setten hem adoun,
With humble herte and sad devotioun,
And losten bothe hir hedes in the place;
Hir soules wenten to the king of grace.

This Maximus, that saw this thing betide,
With pitous teres told it anon right,
That he hir soules saw to heven glide
With angels, ful of clerenesse and of light;
And with his word converted many a wight.
For which Almachius did him to-bete
With whip of led, til he his lif gan lete.

Cecile him toke, and buried him anon
By Tiburce and Valerian softely,
Within hir burying place, under the ston.
And after this Almachius hastily
Bad his ministres fetchen openly
Cecile, so that she might in his presence
Don sacrifice, and Jupiter encense.

But they converted at hire wise lore
Wepten ful sore, and yaven ful credence
Unto hire word, and crieden more and more;
Crist, Goddes sone, withouten difference
Is veray God, this is all our sentence,
That hath so good a servant him to serve:
Thus with o vois we trowen though we sterve.

Almachius, that herd of this doing,
Bad fetchen Cecile, that he might hire see:
And alderfirst, lo, this was his axing;
What maner woman arte thou? quod he.
I am a gentilwoman borne, quod she.
I axe thee, quod he, though it thee greve,
Of thy religion and of thy beleve.

Why than began your question folily,
Quod she, that woldest two answers conclude
In o demand? ye axen lewedly.
Almache answerd to that similitude,
Of whennes cometh thin answering so rude?
Of whennes? (quod she, whan that she was freined)
Of conscience, and of good faith unfeined.

Almachius said; ne takest thou non hede
Of my power? and she him answerd this;
Your might (quod she) ful litel is to drede;
For every mortal mannes power n'is
But like a bladder ful of wind ywis:
For with a nedles point, whan it is blow,
May all the bost of it be laid ful low.

Ful wrongfully begonnest thou, (quod he)
And yet in wrong is al thy perseverance:
Wost thou not how our mighty princes free
Have thus commanded and made ordinance,
That every cristen wight shal han penance
But if that he his Cristendome withseye,
And gon al quite, if he wol it reneye?

Your princes erren, as your nobley doth,
Quod tho Cecile, and with a wood sentence
Ye make us gilty, and it is not soth:
For ye that knowen wel our innocence,
For as moche as we don ay reverence
To Crist, and for we bere a Cristen name,
Ye put on us a crime and eke a blame.

But we that knowen thilke name so
For vertuous, we may it not withseye.
Almache answered; chese on of thise two,
Do sacrifice, or Cristendom reneye,
That thou mow now escapen by that wey.
At which this holy blisful fayre maid
Gan for to laughe, and to the juge said:

O juge confuse in thy nicetee,
Woldest thou that I reneye innocence?
To maken me a wicked wight (quod she)
Lo, he dissimuleth here in audience,
He stareth and wodeth in his advertence.
To whom Almachius said; Unsely wretch,
Ne wost thou not how far my might may stretch?

Han not our mighty princes to me yeven
Ya bothe power and eke auctoritee
To maken folk to dien or to liven?
Why spekest thou so proudly than to me?
I ne speke nought but stedfastly, quod she,
Not proudely, for I say, as for my side,
We haten dedly thilke vice of pride.

And if thou drede not a soth for to here,
Than wol I shewe al openly by right,
That thou hast made a ful gret lesing here.
Thou saist, thy princes han thee yeven might
Both for to slee and for to quiken a wight,
Thou that ne maist but only lif bereve,
Thou hast non other power ne no leve.

But thou maist sayn, thy princes han thee maked
Ministre of deth; for if thou speke of mo,
Thou liest; for thy power is ful naked.
Do way thy boldnesse, said Almachius tho,
And sacrifice to our goddes, er thou go.
I recke not what wrong that thou me proffre,
For I can suffre it as a philosophre.

But thilke wronges may I not endure,
That thou spekest of our goddes here, quod he.
Cecile answerd; o nice creature,
Thou saidest no word sin thou spake to me,
That I ne knew therwith thy nicetee,
And that thou were in every maner wise
A lewed officer, a vain justice.

Ther lacketh nothing to thin utter eyen
That thou n'art blind; for thing that we seen alle
That is a ston, that men may wel espien,
That ilke ston a god thou wolt it calle.
I rede thee let thin hond upon it falle,
And tast it wel, and ston thou shalt it find,
Sin that thou seest not with thin eyen blind.

It is a shame that the peple shal
So scornen thee, and laugh at thy folie:
For comunly men wot it wel over al,
That mighty God is in his hevens hie;
And thise images, wel maist thou espie,
To thee ne to hemself may not profite,
For in effect they be not worth a mite.

Thise and swiche other wordes saide she,
And he wex wroth, and bade men shuld hire lede
Home til hire house, and in hire hous (quod he)
Brenne hire right in a bath, with flames rede.
And as he bade, right so was don the dede;
For in a bathe they gonne hire faste shetten,
And night and day gret fire they under betten.

The longe night, and eke a day also,
For all the fire, and eke the bathes hete,
She sate al cold, and felt of it no wo,
It made hire not a drope for to swete:
But in that bath hire lif she muste lete.
For he Almache, with a ful wicke entent,
To sleen hire in the bath his sonde sent.

Three strokes in the nekke he smote hire tho
The turmentour, but for no maner chance
He mighte not smite all hire nekke atwo:
And for ther was that time an ordinance
That no man shulde don man swiche penance,
The fourthe stroke to smiten, soft or sore,
This turmentour ne dorste do no more;

But half ded, with hire nekke ycorven ther
He left hire lie, and on his way is went.
The cristen folk, which that about hire were,
With shetes han the blood ful faire yhent:
Three dayes lived she in this turment,
And never cesed hem the faith to teche,
That she had fostred hem, she gan to preche.

And hem she yaf hire mebles and hire thing,
And to the pope Urban betoke hem tho,
And said; I axed this of heven king,
To have respit three dayes and no mo,
To recommend to you, or that I go,
Thise soules lo, and that I might do werche
Here of min hous perpetuellich a cherche.

Seint Urban, with his dekenes prively
The body fette, and buried it by night
Among his other seintes honestly:
Hire hous the cherche of seinte Cecile hight
Seint Urban halowed it, as he wel might,
In which unto this day in noble wise
Men don to Crist and to his seinte servise.

THE CHANONES YEMANNES TALE.

THE CHANONES YEMANNES PROLOGUE.

Whan that tolde was the lif of seinte Cecile,
Er we had ridden fully five mile,
At Boughton under blee us gan atake
A man, that clothed was in clothes blake,
And undernethe he wered a white surplis.
His hakeney, which that was al pomelee gris,
So swatte, that it wonder was to see,
It semed as he had priked miles three.
The horse eke that his yeman rode upon,
So swatte, that unnethes might he gon.
About the peytrel stood the fome ful hie,
He was of fome as flecked as a pie.
A male tweifold on his croper lay,
It semed that he caried litel array,
Al light for sommer rode this worthy man.
And in my herte wondren I began

What that he was, til that I understode,
How that his cloke was sowed to his hode ;
For which whan I had long avised me,
I demed him some chanon for to be.
His hat heng at his back doun by a las,
For he had ridden more than trot or pas,
He had ay priked like as he were wode.
A clote-lefe he had laid under his hode
For swete, and for to kepe his hed fro hete.
But it was joye for to seen him swete ;
His forehed dropped, as a stillatorie
Were ful of plantaine or of paritorie.
And whan that he was come, he gan to crie,
God save (quod he) this joly compagnie.
Fast have I priked (quod he) for your sake,
Because that I wolde you atake,
To riden in this mery compagnie.
His yeman was eke ful of curtesie,
And saide ; Sires, now in the morwe tide
Out of your hostelrie I saw you ride,
And warned here my lord and soverain,
Which that to riden with you is ful fain,
For his disport ; he loveth daliance.
Frend, for thy warning God yeve thee good chance,
Than said our hoste ; certain it wolde seme
Thy lord were wise, and so I may wel deme ;
He is ful joconde also dare I leye :
Can he ought tell a mery tale or tweie,
With which he gladen may this compagnie ?
Who, sire ? my lord ? Ye, sire, withouten lie,
He can of mirth and eke of jolitee
Not but ynough ; also, sire, trusteth me,
And ye him knew al so wel as do I,
Ye wolden wondre how wel and craftily
He coude werke, and that in sondry wise.
He hath take on him many a gret emprise,
Which were ful harde for any that is here
To bring about, but they of him it lere.
As homely as he rideth amonges you,
If ye him knew, it wold be for your prow :
Ye wolden not forgon his acquaintance
For mochel good, I dare lay in balance
All that I have in my possession.
He is a man of high discression,
I warne you wel, he is a passing man.
Wel, quod our hoste, I pray thee tell me than,
Is he a clerk, or non ? tell what he is.
Nay, he is greter than a clerk ywis,
Saide this yeman, and in wordes fewe,
Hoste, of his craft somwhat I wol you shewe.
I say, my lord can swiche a subtiltee,
(But all his craft ye moun not wete of me,
And somwhat help I yet to his werking)
That all the ground on which we ben riding
Til that we come to Canterbury toun,
He coud al clene turnen up so doun,
And pave it all of silver and of gold.
And whan this yeman had this tale ytolde
Unto our hoste, he said ; *benedicite*,
This thing is wonder mervaillous to me,
Sin that thy lord is of so high prudence,
Because of which men shulde him reverence,
That of his worship rekketh he so lite ;
His overest sloppe it is not worth a mite
As in effect to him, so mote I go ;
It is all baudy and to-tore also.
Why is thy lord so sluttish I thee preye,
And is of power better cloth to beye,
If that his dede acorded with thy speche ?
Telle me that, and that I thee beseche.

Why ? quod this yeman, wherto axe ye me ?
God helpe me so, for he shal never the :
(But I wol not avowen that I say,
And therfore kepe it secree I you pray)
He is to wise in faith, as I beleve.
Thing that is overdon, it wol not preve
Aright, as clerkes sain, it is a vice ;
Wherfore in that I hold him lewed and nice.
For whan a man hath overgret a wit,
Ful oft him happeth to misusen it :
So doth my lord, and that me greveth sore.
God it amende, I can say now no more.
Therof no force, good yeman, quod our host,
Sin of the conning of thy lord thou wost,
Telle how he doth, I pray thee hertily,
Sin that he is so crafty and so sly.
Wher dwellen ye, if it to tellen be ?
In the subarbes of a toun, quod he,
Lurking in hernes and in lanes blinde,
Wheras thise robbours and thise theves by kinde
Holden hir privee fereful residence,
As they that dare not shewen hir presence,
So faren we, if I shal say the sothe.
Yet, quod our hoste, let me talken to the ;
Why art thou so discoloured of thy face ?
Peter, quod he, God yeve it harde grace,
I am so used the hote fire to blow,
That it hath changed my colour I trow ;
I n'am not wont in no mirrour to prie,
But swinke sore, and lerne to multiplie.
We blundren ever, and poren in the fire,
And for all that we faille of our desire,
For ever we lacken our conclusion.
To mochel folk we don illusion,
And borwe gold, be it a pound or two,
Or ten or twelve, or many sommes mo,
And make hem wenen at the leste wey,
That of a pound we connen maken twey,
Yet is it false ; and ay we han good hope
It for to don, and after it we grope :
But that science is so fer us beforne,
We mowen not, although we had it sworne,
It overtake, it slit away so fast ;
It wol us maken beggers at the last.
While this yeman was thus in his talking,
This Chanon drow him nere, and herd all thing
Which this yeman spake, for suspecion
Of mennes speche ever had this Chanon :
For Caton sayth, that he that gilty is,
Demeth all thing be spoken of him ywis :
That was the cause, he gan so nigh him drawe
To his yeman, to herken all his sawe,
And thus he saide unto his yeman tho ;
Hold thou thy pees, and speke no wordes mo :
For if thou do, thou shalt it dere abie.
Thou sclaundrest me here in this compagnie,
And eke discoverest that thou shuldest hide.
Ye, quod our hoste, tell on, what so betide ;
Of all his thretening recke not a mite.
In faith, quod he, no more I do but lite.
And whan this Chanon saw it wold not be,
But his yeman wold tell his privetee,
He fled away for veray sorwe and shame.
A, quod the yeman, here shal rise a game :
All that I can anon I wol you telle,
Sin he is gon ; the foule fend him quelle ;
For never hereafter wol I with him mete
For peny ne for pound, I you behete.
He that me broughte first unto that game,
Er that he die, sorwe have he and shame.

For it it is ernest to me by faith ;
That fele I wel, what that any man saith ;
And yet for all my smert, and all my grief,
For all my sorwe, labour, and meschief,
I coude never leve it in no wise.
Now wolde God my wit mighte suffice
To tellen all that longeth to that art ;
But natheles, yet wol I tellen part ;
Sin that my lord is gon, I wol not spare,
Swiche thing as that I know, I wol declare.

THE CHANONES YEMANNES TALE.

With this Chanon I dwelt have seven yere,
And of his science am I never the nere :
All that I had, I have ylost therby,
And God wot, so han many mo than I.
Ther I was wont to be right fresh and gay
Of clothing, and of other good array,
Now may I were an hose upon min hed ;
And wher my colour was both fresh and red,
Now is it wan, and of a leden hewe ;
(Who so it useth, so shal he it rewe)
And of my swinke yet blered is min eye ;
Lo which avantage is to multiplie !
That sliding science hath me made so bare,
That I have no good, wher that ever I fare ;
And yet I am endetted so therby
Of gold, that I have borwed trewely,
That while I live, I shal it quiten never ;
Let every man be ware by me for ever.
What maner man that casteth him therto,
If he continue, I hold his thrift ydo ;
So help me God, therby shal he nat winne,
But empte his purse, and make his wittes thinne.
And whan he, thurgh his madnesse and folie,
Hath lost his owen good thurgh jupartie,
Than he exciteth other folk therto,
To lese hir good as he himself hath do.
For unto shrewes joye it is and ese
To have hir felawes in peine and disese.
Thus was I ones lerned of a clerk ;
Of that no charge ; I wol speke of our werk.
Whan we be ther as we shuln exercise
Our elvish craft, we semen wonder wise,
Our termes ben so clergial and queinte.
I blow the fire til that myn herte feinte.
What shuld I tellen eche proportion
Of thinges, whiche that we werchen upon,
As on five or six unces, may wel be,
Of silver, or som other quantitee ?
And besie me to tellen you the names,
As orpiment, brent bones, yren squames,
That into poudre grounden ben ful smal ?
And in an erthen pot how put is al,
And salt yput in, and also pepere,
Beforn thise poudres that I speke of here,
And wel ycovered with a lampe of glas ?
And of moche other thing which that ther was ?
And of the pottes and glasses engluting,
That of the aire might passen out no thing ?
And of the esy fire, and smert also,
Which that was made ? and of the care and wo,
That we had in our materes subliming,
And in amalgaming, and calcening
Of quiksilver, ycleped mercurie crude ?
For all our sleightes we can not conclude.
Our orpiment, and sublimed mercurie,
Our grounden litarge eke on the porphurie,
Of eche of thise of unces a certain
Not helpeth us, our labour is in vain.
Ne, neyther our spirites ascentioun,
Ne our materes that lien al fix adoun,
Mown in our werking nothing us availle ;
For lost is all our labour and travaille,
And all the cost a twenty devil way
Is lost also, which we upon it lay.
Ther is also ful many another thing,
That is unto our craft apperteining,
Though I by ordre hem nat rehersen can,
Because that I am a lewed man,
Yet wol I telle hem, as they come to minde,
Though I ne cannot set hem in hir kinde,
As bole armoniak, verdegrese, boras ;
And sondry vessels made of erthe and glas,
Our urinales, and our descensories,
Viols, croslettes, and sublimatories,
Cucuribtes, and alembikes eke,
And other swiche gere, dere ynough a leke,
What nedeth it for to reherse hem alle ?
Wateres rubifying, and bolles galle,
Arsenik, sal armoniak, and brimston ?
And herbes coude I tell eke many on,
As egremoine, valerian, and lunarie,
And other swiche, if that me list to tarie ;
Our lampes brenning bothe night and day,
To bring about our craft if that we may ;
Our fourneis eke of calcination,
And of wateres albification,
Unslekked lime, chalk, and gleire of an ey,
Poudres divers, ashes, dong, pisse, and cley,
Sered pokettes, sal peter, and vitriole ;
And divers fires made of wode and cole ;
Sal tartre, alcaly, and salt preparat,
And combust materes, and coagulat ;
Cley made with hors and mannes here, and oile
Of tartre, alum, glas, berme, wort, and argoile,
Rosalgar, and other materes enbibing ;
And eke of our materes encorporing,
And of our silver citrination,
Our cementing, and fermentation,
Our ingottes, testes, and many thinges mo.
I wol you tell as was me taught also
The foure spirites, and the bodies sevene
By ordre, as oft I herd my lord hem nevene.
The firste spirit quiksilver cleped is ;
The second orpiment ; the thridde ywis
Sal armoniak, and the fourth brimston.
The bodies sevene eke, lo hem here anon.
Sol gold is, and Luna silver we threpe ;
Mars iren, Mercurie quiksilver we clepe :
Saturnus led, and Jupiter is tin,
And Venus coper, by my fader kin.
This cursed craft who so wol exercise,
He shal no good have, that him may suffice,
For all the good he spendeth theraboute
He lesen shal, therof have I no doute.
Who so that listeth uttren his folie,
Let him come forth and lernen multiplie :
And every man that hath ought in his cofre,
Let him appere, and wex a philosophre,
Ascaunce that craft is so light to lere.
Nay, nay, God wot, al be he monk or frere,
Preest or chanon, or any other wight,
Though he sit at his book both day and night
In lerning of this elvish nice lore,
All is in vain, and parde mochel more

To lerne a lewed man this subtiltee ;
Fie, speke not therof, for it wol not be.
And conne he letterure, or conne he non,
As in effect, he shal finde it all on ;
For bothe two by my salvation
Concluden in multiplication
Ylike wel, whan they have all ydo ;
This is to sain, they faillen bothe two.
Yet forgate I to maken rehersaile
Of waters corosif, and of limaile,
And of bodies mollification,
And also of hir induration,
Oiles, ablusions, metal fusible,
To tellen all, wold passen any bible,
That o wher is ; wherfore as for the best
Of all thise names now wol I me rest ;
For as I trow, I have you told ynow
To reise a fend, al loke he never so row.
A, nay, let be ; the philosophres ston,
Elixer cleped, we seken fast eche on,
For had we him, than were we siker ynow ;
But unto God of heven I make avow,
For all our craft, whan we han all ydo,
And all our sleight, he wol not come us to.
He hath ymade us spenden mochel good,
For sorwe of which almost we waxen wood,
But that good hope crepeth in our herte,
Supposing ever, though we sore smerte,
To ben releved of him afterward.
Swiche supposing and hope is sharpe and hard
I warne you wel it is to seken ever.
That future *temps* hath made men dissever,
In trust therof, from all that ever they had,
Yet of that art they conne not waxen sad,
For unto hem it is a bitter swete ;
So semeth it ; for ne had they but a shete
Which that they might wrappen hem in a-night,
And a bratt to walken in by day-light,
They wold hem sell, and spend it on this craft ;
They conne not stinten, til no thing be laft.
And evermore, wher ever that they gon,
Men may hem kennen by smell of brimston ;
For all the world they stinken as a gote ;
Hir savour is so rammish and so hote,
That though a man a mile from hem be,
The savour wol enfect him, trusteth me.
Lo, thus by smelling and thred-bare array,
If that men list, this folk they knowen may.
And if a man wol axe hem prively,
Why they be clothed so unthriftily,
They right anon wol rounen in his ere,
And saien, if that they espied were,
Men wolde hem sle, because of hir science :
Lo, thus thise folk betraien innocence.
Passe over this, I go my tale unto.
Er that the pot be on the fire ydo
Of metals with a certain quantitee,
My lord hem tempereth, and no man but he ;
(Now he is gon, I dare say boldely)
For as men sain, he can don craftily ;
Algate I wote wel he hath swiche a name,
And yet ful oft he renneth in a blame ;
And wete ye how ? ful oft it falleth so,
The pot to-breketh, and farewel all is go.
Thise metales ben of so gret violence,
Our walles may not make hem resistence,
But if they weren wrought of lime and ston ;
They percen so, that thurgh the wall they gon ;
And som of hem sinke doun into the ground,
(Thus have we lost by times many a pound)
And som are scatered all the flore aboute ;
Som lepen into the roof withouten doute.
Though that the fend not in our sight him shewe,
I trow that he be with us, thilke shrewe,
In helle, wher that he is lord and sire,
Ne is ther no more wo, rancour, ne ire.
Whan that our pot is broke, as I have sayde,
Every man chit, and holt him evil apayde.
Som sayd it was long on the fire-making ;
Som sayd nay, it was long on the blowing ;
(Than was I ferd, for that was min office)
Straw, quod the thridde, ye ben lewed and nice,
It was not tempred as it ought to be.
Nay, quod the fourthe, stint and herken me ;
Because our fire was not made of beche,
That is the cause, and other non, so the iche.
I can not tell wheron it was along,
But wel I wot gret strif is us among.
What ? quod my lord, ther n'is no more to don,
Of thise perils I wol beware eftsone.
I am right siker, that the pot was crased.
Be as be may, be ye no thing amased.
As usage is, let swepe the flore as swithe ;
Plucke up your hertes and be glad and blithe.
The mullok on an hepe ysweped was,
And on the flore ycast a canevas,
And all this mullok in a sive ythrowe,
And sifted, and ypicked many a throwe.
Parde, quod on, somwhat of our metall
Yet is ther here, though that we have not all.
And though this thing mishapped hath as now,
Another time it may be wel ynow.
We mosten put our good in aventure ;
A marchant parde may not ay endure,
Trusteth me wel, in his prosperitee :
Somtime his good is drenched in the see,
And somtime cometh it sauf unto the lond.
Pees, quod my lord, the next time I wol fond
To bring our craft all in another plite,
And but I do, sires, let me have the wite :
Ther was defaute in somwhat, wel I wote.
Another sayd, the fire was over hote.
But be it hote or cold, I dare say this,
That we concluden ever more amis :
We faille alway of that which we wold have,
And in our madnesse evermore we rave.
And whan we be together everich on,
Every man semeth a Salomon.
But all thing, which that shineth as the gold,
Ne is no gold, as I have herd it told ;
Ne every apple that is faire at eye,
Ne is not good, what so men clap or crie.
Right so, lo, fareth it amonges us.
He that semeth the wisest by Jesus
Is most fool, whan it cometh to the prefe ;
And he that semeth trewest, is a thefe.
That shal ye know, or that I from you wende,
By that I of my tale have made an ende.
Ther was a chanon of religioun
Amonges us, wold enfect all a toun,
Though it as gret were as was Ninive,
Rome, Alisaundre, Troie, or other three.
His sleightes and his infinite falsenesse
Ther coude no man writen, as I gesse,
Though that he mighte live a thousand yere ;
In all this world of falsenesse n'is his pere.
For in his termes he wol him so winde,
And speke his wordes in so slie a kinde,
Whan he comunen shal with any wight,
That he wol make him doten anon right,

But it a fend be, as himselven is.
Ful many a man hath he begiled er this,
And wol, if that he may live any while:
And yet men gon and riden many a mile
Him for to seke, and have his acquaintance,
Not knowing of his false governance.
And if you lust to yeve me audience,
I wol it tellen here in your presence.
But, worshipful Chanons religious,
Ne demeth not that I sclander your hous,
Although that my tale of a Chanon be.
Of every order som shrew is parde:
And God forbede that all a compagnie
Shuld rewe a singuler mannes folie.
To sclander you is no thing min entent,
But to correcten that is mis I ment.
This tale was not only told for you,
But eke for other mo: ye wote wel how
That among Cristes aposteles twelve
Ther was no traitour but Judas himselve:
Than why shuld al the remenant have blame,
That giltles were? by you I say the same.
Save only this, if ye wol herken me,
If any Judas in your covent be,
Remeveth him betimes, I you rede,
If shame or los may causen any drede.
And be no thing displesed I you pray,
But in this cas herkeneth what I say.

In London was a preest, an annuellere,
That therin dwelled hadde many a yere,
Which was so plesant and so servisable
Unto the wif, ther as he was at table,
That she wold suffer him no thing to pay
For borde ne clothing, went he never so gay;
And spending silver had he right ynow:
Therof no force; I wol proceed as now,
And tellen forth my tale of the Chanon,
That broughte this preest to confusion.
This false Chanon came upon a day
Unto the preestes chambre, ther he lay,
Beseeching him to lene him a certain
Of gold, and he wold quite it him again.
Lene me a marke, quod he, but dayes three,
And at my day I wol it quiten thee.
And if it so be, that thou finde me false,
Another day hang me up by the halse.
This preest him toke a marke, and that as swith,
And this Chanon him thanked often sith,
And toke his leve, and wente forth his wey:
And at the thridde day brought his money;
And to the preest he toke his gold again,
Wherof this preest was wonder glad and fain.
Certes, quod he, nothing anoieth me
To lene a man a noble, or two, or three,
Or what thing were in my possession,
Whan he so trewe is of condition,
That in no wise he breken wol his day:
To swiche a man I can never say nay.
What? quod this Chanon, shuld I be untrewe?
Nay, that were thing fallen al of the newe.
Trouth is a thing that I wol ever kepe
Unto the day in which that I shal crepe
Into my grave, and elles God forbede:
Beleveth this as siker as your crede.
God thanke I, and in good time be it sayde,
That ther n'as never man yet evil apayde
For gold ne silver that he to me lent,
Ne never falshede in min herte I ment.

And, sire, (quod he) now of my privetee,
Sin ye so goodlich have ben unto me,
And kithed to me so gret gentillesse,
Somwhat, to quiten with your kindenesse,
I wol you shewe, and if you lust to lere
I wol you techen pleinly the manere,
How I can werken in philosophie.
Taketh good heed, ye shuln wel sen at eye,
That I wol do a maistrie or I go.
Ye? quod the preest, ye, sire, and wol ye so?
Mary therof I pray you hertily.
At your commandement, sire, trewely,
Quod the Chanon, and elles God forbede.
Lo, how this thefe coude his service bede.
Ful soth it is that swiche profered service
Stinketh, as witnessen thise olde wise;
And that ful sone I wol it verifie
In this Chanon, rote of all trecherie,
That evermore delight hath and gladnesse
(Swiche fendly thoughtes in his herte empresse)
How Cristes peple he may to meschief bring.
God kepe us from his false dissimuling.
Nought wiste this preest with whom that he delt,
Ne of his harme coming nothing he felt.
O sely preest, o sely innocent,
With covetise anon thou shalt be blent;
O graceles, ful blind is thy conceite,
For nothing art thou ware of the disceite,
Which that this fox yshapen hath to thee;
His wily wrenches thou ne mayst not flee.
Wherfore to go to the conclusion
That referreth to thy confusion,
Unhappy man, anon I wol me hie
To tellen thin unwit and thy folie,
And eke the falsenesse of that other wretch,
As ferforth as that my conning wol stretch.
This Chanon was my lord, ye wolden wene;
Sire hoste, in faith, and by the heven quene,
It was another Chanon, and not he,
That can an hundred part more subtiltee.
He hath betraied folkes many a time;
Of his falsenesse it dulleth me to rime.
Ever whan that I speke of his falshede
For shame of him my chekes waxen rede;
Algates they beginnen for to glowe,
For rednesse have I non, right wel I knowe,
In my visage, for fumes diverse
Of metals, which ye have herd me reherse,
Consumed han and wasted my rednesse.
Now take hede of this Chanons cursednesse.
Sire, quod the Chanon, let your yeman gon
For quiksilver, that we it had anon;
And let him bringen unces two or three;
And whan he cometh, as faste shul ye see
A wonder thing, which ye saw never er this.
Sire, quod the preest, it shal be don ywis.
He bad his servant fetchen him this thing,
And he al redy was at his bidding,
And went him forth, and came anon again
With this quiksilver, shortly for to sain,
And toke thise unces three to the Chanoun;
And he hem laide wel and faire adoun,
And bad the servant coles for to bring,
That he anon might go to his werking.
The coles right anon weren yfet,
And this Chanon toke out a crosselet
Of his bosome, and shewed it to the preest.
This instrument, quod he, which that thou seest,
Take in thyn hond, and put thyself therin
Of this quiksilver an unce, and here begin

In the name of Crist to wex a philosophre.
Ther be ful fewe, which that I wolde profre
To shewen hem thus muche of my science :
For here shul ye see by experience,
That this quiksilver I wol mortifie,
Right in your sight anon withouten lie,
And make it as good silver and as fine,
As ther is any in your purse or mine,
Or elles wher ; and make it malliable ;
And elles holdeth me false and unable
Amonges folk for ever to appere.
I have a pouder here that cost me dere,
Shal make all good, for it is cause of all
My conning, which that I you shewen shall.
Voideth your man, and let him be therout ;
And shet the dore, while we ben about
Our privetee, that no man us espie,
While that we werke in this philosophie.
All, as he bade, fulfilled was in dede.
This ilke servant anon right out yede,
And his maister shette the dore anon,
And to hir labour spedily they gon.
This preest at this cursed Chanons bidding,
Upon the fire anon he set this thing,
And blew the fire, and besied him ful fast.
And this Chanon into the crosselet cast
A pouder, n'ot I never wherof it was
Ymade, other of chalk, other of glas,
Or somwhat elles, was not worth a flie,
To blinden with this preest ; and bade him hie
The coles for to couchen all above
The crosselet ; for in tokening I thee love
(Quod this Chanon) thine owen hondes two
Shal werken all thing which that here is do.
Grand mercy, quod the preest, and was ful glad,
And couched the coles as the Chanon bad.
And while he besy was, this fendly wretch,
This false Chanon (the foule fend him fetch)
Out of his bosom toke a bechen cole,
In which ful subtilly was made an hole,
And therin put was of silver limaile
An unce, and stopped was withouten faile
The hole with wax, to kepe the limaile in.
And understandeth, that this false gin
Was not made ther, but it was made before ;
And other thinges I shal tell you more
Hereafterward, which that he with him brought ;
Er he came ther, him to wegile he thought,
And so he did, or that they went atwin :
Til he had torned him, coud he not blin.
It dulleth me, whan that I of him speke ;
On his falshede fain wold I me awreke,
If I wist how, but he is here and ther,
He is so variaunt, he abit no wher.
But taketh hede, sires, now for Goddes love.
He toke his cole, of which I spake above,
And in his hond he bare it prively,
And whiles the preest couched besily
The coles, as I tolde you er this,
This Chanon sayde ; frend, ye don amis ;
This is not couched as it ought to be,
But sone I shal amenden it, quod he.
Now let me meddle therwith but a while,
For of you have I pitee by Seint Gile.
Ye ben right hot, I see wel how ye swete ;
Have here a cloth and wipe away the wete.
And whiles that the preest wiped his face,
This Chanon toke his cole, with sory grace,
And laied it above on the midward
Of the crosselet, and blew wel afterward,
Til that the coles gonnen fast to bren.
Now yeve us drinke, quod this Chanon then,
As swithe all shal be wel, I undertake.
Sitte we doun, and let us mery make.
And whanne that this Chanones bechen cole
Was brent, all the limaile out of the hole
Into the crosselet anon fell adoun ;
And so it muste nedes by resoun,
Sin it above so even couched was ;
But therof wist the preest nothing, alas !
He demed all the coles ylike good,
For of the sleight he nothing understood.
And whan this Alkymistre saw his time,
Riseth up, sire preest, quod he, and stondeth by me ;
And for I wote wel ingot have ye non,
Goth, walketh forth, and bringeth a chalk ston ;
For I wol make it of the same shap,
That is an ingot, if I may have hap.
Bring eke with you a bolle or elles a panne
Ful of water, and ye shul wel see thanne
How that our besinesse shal thrive and preve.
And yet, for ye shul have no misbeleve
No wrong conceit of me in your absence,
I ne wol not ben out of your presence,
But go with you, and come with you again.
The chambre dore, shortly for to sain,
They opened and shet, and went hir wey,
And forth with hem they caried the key,
And camen again withouten any delay.
What shuld I tarien all the longe day ?
He toke the chalk, and shope it in the wise
Of an ingot, as I shal you devise ;
I say, he toke out of his owen sleve
A teine of silver (yvel mote he cheve)
Which that ne was but a just unce of weight.
And taketh heed now of his cursed sleight ;
He shop his ingot, in length and in brede
Of thilke teine, withouten any drede,
So slily, that the preest it not espide ;
And in his sleve again he gan it hide ;
And from the fire he toke up his matere,
And in the ingot it put with mery chere :
And in the water-vessel he it cast,
Whan that him list, and bad the preest as fast,
Loke what ther is : put in thin hond and grope ;
Thou shalt ther finden silver as I hope.
What, divel of helle ! shuld it elles be ?
Shaving of silver, silver is parde.
He put his hond in, and toke up a teine
Of silver fine, and glad in every veine
Was this preest, whan he saw that it was so.
Goddes blessing, and his mothers also,
And alle Halwes, have ye, sire Chanon,
Sayde this preest, and I hir malison,
But, and ye vouchesauf to techen me
This noble craft and this subtilitee,
I wol be your in all that ever I may.
Quod the Chanon, yet wol I make assay
The second time, that ye mow taken hede,
And ben expert of this, and in your nede
Another day assay in min absence
This discipline, and this crafty science.
Let take another unce, quod he tho,
Of quiksilver, withouten wordes mo,
And do therwith as ye have don er this
With that other, which that now silver is.
The preest him besieth all that ever he can
To don as this Chanon, this cursed man,
Commandeth him, and faste blowe the fire,
For to come to the effect of his desire.

And this Chanon right in the mene while
Al redy was this preest eft to begile,
And for a countenance in his hond bare
An holow stikke, (take kepe and beware)
In the ende of which an unce and no more
Of silver limaile put was, as before
Was in his cole, and stopped with wax wel
For to kepe in his limaile every del.
And while this preest was in his besinesse,
This Chanon with his stikke gan him dresse
To him anon, and his pouder cast in,
As he did erst, (the devil out of his skin
Him torne, I pray to God, for his falshede,
For he was ever false in thought and dede)
And with his stikke, above the crosselet,
That was ordained with that false get,
He stirreth the coles, til relenten gan
The wax again the fire, as every man,
But he a fool be, wote wel it mote nede.
And all that in the stikke was out yede,
And in the crosselet hastily it fell.
Now, goode sires, what wol ye bet than wel?
Whan that this preest was thus begiled again,
Supposing nought but trouthe, soth to sain,
He was so glad, that I can not expresse
In no manere his mirth and his gladnesse,
And to the Chanon he profered eftsone
Body and good: ye, quod the Chanon, sone,
Though poure I be, crafty thou shalt me finde:
I warne thee wel, yet is ther more behinde.
Is ther any coper here within? sayd he.
Ye, sire, quod the preest, I trow ther be.
Elles go beie us som, and that as swithe.
Now, goode sire, go forth thy way and hie the.
He went his way, and with the coper he came,
And this Chanon it in his hondes name,
And of that coper weyed out an unce.
To simple is my tonge to pronounce,
As minister of my wit, the doublenesse
Of this Chanon, rote of all cursednesse.
He semed frendly, to hem that knew him nought,
But he was fendly, both in werk and thought.
It werieth me to tell of his falsenesse;
And natheles yet wol I it expresse,
To that entent men may beware therby,
And for non other cause trewely.
He put this coper into the crosselet,
And on the fire as swithe he hath it set,
And cast in pouder, and made the preest to blow,
And in his werking for to stoupen low,
As he did erst, and all n'as but a jape;
Right as him list the preest he made his ape.
And afterward in the ingot he it cast,
And in the panne put it at the last
Of water, and in he put his owen hond;
And in his sleve, as ye beforen hond
Herde me tell, he had a silver teine;
He slily toke it out, this cursed heine,
(Unweting this preest of his false craft)
And in the pannes botome he it laft.
And in the water rombleth to and fro,
And wonder prively toke up also
The coper teine, (not knowing thilke preest)
And hid it, and him hente by the brest,
And to him spake, and thus said in his game;
Stoupeth adoun; by God ye be to blame;
Helpeth me now, as I did you whilere;
Put in your hond, and loketh what is there.
This preest toke up this silver teine anon;
And thanne said the Chanon, let us gon
With thise three teines which that we han wrought,
To som goldsmith, and wete if they ben ought:
For by my faith I n'olde for my hood
But if they weren silver fine and good,
And that as swithe wel preved shal it be.
Unto the goldsmith with thise teines three
They went anon, and put hem in assay
To fire and hammer: might no man say nay,
But that they weren as hem ought to be.
This soted preest, who was gladder than he?
Was never brid gladder agains the day,
Ne nightingale in the seson of May
Was never non, that list better to sing,
Ne lady lustier in carolling,
Or for to speke of love and womanhede,
Ne knight in armes don a hardy dede
To stonden in grace of his lady dere,
Than hadde this preest this craft for to lere;
And to the Chanon thus he spake and seid;
For the love of God, that for us alle deid,
And as I may deserve it unto you,
What shal this receit cost? telleth me now.
By our lady, quod this Chanon, it is dere.
I warne you wel, that, save I and a frere,
In Englelond ther can no man it make.
No force, quod he; now, sire, for Goddes sake,
What shall I pay? telleth me, I you pray.
Ywis, quod he, it is ful dere I say.
Sire, at o word, if that you list it have,
Ye shal pay fourty pound, so God me save;
And n'ere the frendship that ye did er this
To me, ye shulden payen more ywis.
This preest the sum of fourty pound anon
Of nobles fet, and toke hem everich on
To this Chanon, for this ilke receit.
All his werking n'as but fraud and deceit.
Sire preest, he said, I kepe for to have no loos
Of my craft, for I wold it were kept cloos;
And as ye love me, kepeth it secree:
For if men knewen all my subtiltee,
By God they wolden have so gret envie
To me, because of my philosophie,
I shuld be ded, ther were non other way.
God it forbede, quod the preest, what ye say.
Yet had I lever spenden all the good
Which that I have, (and elles were I wood)
Than that ye shuld fallen in swiche meschefe.
For your good will, sire, have ye right good prefe,
Quod the Chanon, and farewel, *grand mercy.*
He went his way, and never the preest him sey
After that day: and whan that this preest shold
Maken assay, at swiche time as he wold,
Of this receit, farewel, it n'olde not be.
Lo, thus bejaped and begiled was he:
Thus maketh he his introduction
To bringen folk to hir destruction.
Considereth, sires, how that in eche estat
Betwixen men and gold ther is debat,
So ferforth that unnethes is ther non.
This multiplying so blint many on,
That in good faith I trowe that it be
The cause gretest of swiche scarsitee.
Thise philosophres speke so mistily
In this craft, that men cannot come therby,
For any wit that men have now adayes.
They mow wel chateren, as don thise jayes,
And in hir termes set hir lust and peine,
But to hir purpos shul they never atteine.
A man may lightly lerne, if he have ought,
To multiplie, and bring his good to nought.

Lo, swiche a lucre is in this lusty game ;
A mannes mirth it wol turne al to grame,
And emptien also gret and hevy purses,
And maken folk for to purchasen curses
Of hem, that han therto hir good ylent.
O, fy for shame, they that han be brent,
Alas ! can they not flee the fires hete ?
Ye that it use, I rede that ye it lete,
Lest ye lese all ; for bet than never is late :
Never to thriven, were to long a date.
Though ye prolle ay, ye shul it never find :
Ye ben as bold as is Bayard the blind,
That blondereth forth, and peril casteth non :
He is as bold to renne agains a ston,
As for to go besides in the way :
So faren ye that multiplien, I say.
If that your eyen cannot seen aright,
Loketh that youre mind lacke not his sight.
For though ye loke never so brode and stare,
Ye shul not win a mite on that chaffare,
But wasten all that ye may rape and renne.
Withdraw the fire, lest it to faste brenne ;
Medleth no more with that art, I mene ;
For if ye don, your thrift is gon ful clene.
And right as swithe I wol you tollen here
What philosophres sain in this matere.
Lo, thus saith Arnolde of the newe toun,
As his Rosarie maketh mentioun,
He saith right thus, withouten any lie ;
Ther may no man Mercurie mortifie,
But it be with his brothers knowleching.
Lo, how that he, which firste said this thing,
Of philosophres father was Hermes :
He saith, how that the dragon douteles
Ne dieth not, but if that he be slain
With his brother. And this is for to sain,
By the dragon Mercury, and non other,
He understood, and brimstone by his brother,
That out of Sol and Luna were ydrawe.
And therfore, said he, take heed to my sawe.
Let no man besie him this art to seche,
But if that he the entention and speche
Of philosophres understonden can ;
And if he do, he is a lewed man.
For this science and this conning (quod he)
Is of the secree of secrees parde.
Also ther was a disciple of Plato,
That on a time said his maister to,
As his book Senior wol bere witnesse,
And this was his demand in sothfastnesse :
Telle me the name of thilke privee ston.
And Plato answerd unto him anon ;
Take the ston that Titanos men name.
Which is that ? quod he. Magnetia is the same,
Saide Plato. Ye, sire, and is it thus ?
This is *ignotum per ignotius*.
What is Magnetia, good sire, I pray ?
It is a water that is made, I say,
Of the elementes foure, quod Plato.
Tell me the rote, good sire, quod he tho,
Of that water, if that it be your will.
Nay, nay, quod Plato, certain that I n'ill.
The philosophres were sworne everich on,
That they ne shuld discover it unto non,
Ne in no book it write in no manere ;
For unto God it is so lefe and dere,
That he wol not that it discovered be,
But wher it liketh to his deitee
Man for to enspire, and eke for to defende
Whom that him liketh ; lo, this is the ende.
Than thus conclude I, sin that God of heven
Ne wol not that the philosophres neven,
How that a man shal come unto this ston,
I rede as for the best to let it gon.
For who so maketh God his adversary,
As for to werken any thing in contrary
Of his will, certes never shal he thrive,
Though that he multiply terme of his live.
And ther a point ; for ended is my tale.
God send every good man bote of his bale.

THE MANCIPLES TALE.

THE MANCIPLES PROLOGUE.

Wete ye not wher stondeth a litel toun,
Which that ycleped is Bob up and doun,
Under the blee, in Canterbury way ?
Ther gan our hoste to jape and to play,
And sayde ; sires, what ? Dun is in the mire.
Is ther no man for praiere ne for hire,
That wol awaken our felaw behind ?
A thefe him might ful lightly rob and bind.
See how he nappeth, see, for cockes bones,
As he wold fallen from his hors atones.
Is that a coke of London, with meschance ?
Do him come forth, he knoweth his penance ;
For he shal tell a tale by my fey,
Although it be not worth a botel hey.
Awake thou coke, quod he, God yeve thee sorwe,
What aileth thee to slepen by the morwe ?
Hast thou had fleen al night, or art thou dronke ?
Or hast thou with som quene al night yswonke,
So that thou mayst not holden up thin hed ?
This coke, that was ful pale and nothing red,
Sayd to our hoste ; so God my soule bleise,
As ther is falle on me swiche hevinesse,
N'ot I nat why, that me were lever to slepe,
Than the best gallon wine that is in Chepe.
Wel, quod the Manciple, if it may don ese
To thee, sire Coke, and to no wight displese,
Which that here rideth in this compagnie,
And that our hoste wol of his curtesie,
I wol as now excuse thee of thy tale ;
For in good faith thy visage is ful pale :
Thine eyen dasen, sothly as me thinketh,
And wel I wot, thy breth ful soure stinketh,
That sheweth wel thou art not wel disposed :
Of me certain thou shalt not ben yglosed.
See how he galpeth, lo, this dronken wight,
As though he wold us swalow anon right.

Hold close thy mouth, man, by thy father kin:
The devil of helle set his foot therin!
Thy cursed breth enfecten woll us alle:
Fy stinking swine, fy, foul mote thee befalle.
A, taketh heed, sires, of this lusty man.
Now, swete sire, wol ye just at the fan?
Therto, me thinketh, ye be wel yshape.
I trow that ye have dronken win of ape,
And that is whan men playen with a straw.
And with this speche the coke waxed all wraw,
And on the Manciple he gan nod fast
For lacke of speche; and doun his hors him cast,
Wher as he lay, til that men him up toke.
This was a faire chivachee of a coke:
Alas that he ne had hold him by his ladel!
And er that he agen were in the sadel,
Ther was gret shoving bothe to and fro
To lift him up, and mochel care and wo,
So unweldy was this sely palled gost:
And to the Manciple than spake our host.
Because that drinke hath domination
Upon this man, by my salvation
I trow he lewedly wol tell his tale.
For were it win, or old or moisty ale,
That he hath dronke, he speketh in his nose,
And sneseth fast, and eke he hath the pose.
He also hath to don more than ynough
To kepe him on his capel out of the slough:
And if he falle from of his capel eftsone,
Than shul we alle have ynough to done
In lifting up his hevy dronken cors.
Tell on thy tale, of him make I no force.
But yet, Manciple, in faith thou art to nice,
Thus openly to repreve him of his vice:
Another day he wol paraventure
Recleimen thee, and bring thee to the lure:
I mene, he speken wol of smale thinges,
As for to pinchen at thy rekeninges,
That were not honest, if it came to prefe.
Quod the Manciple, that were a gret meschefe:
So might he lightly bring me in the snare.
Yet had I lever payen for the mare,
Which he rit on, than he shuld with me strive.
I wol not wrathen him, so mote I thrive;
That that I spake, I sayd it in my bourd.
And wete ye what? I have here in my gourd
A draught of win, ye of a ripe grape,
And right anon ye shul seen a good jape.
This coke shal drinke therof, if that I may;
Up peine of my lif he wol not say nay.
And certainly, to tellen as it was,
Of this vessell the coke dranke fast, (alas!
What nedeth it? he dranke ynough beforne)
And whan he hadde pouped in his horne,
To the Manciple he toke the gourd again.
And of that drinke the coke was wonder fain,
And thonked him in swiche wise as he coude.
Than gan our hoste to laughen wonder loude,
And sayd; I see wel it is necessary
Wher that we gon good drinke with us to cary;
For that wol turnen rancour and disese
To accord and love, and many a wrong apese.
O Bacchus, Bacchus, blessed be thy name,
That so canst turnen ernest into game;
Worship and thonke be to thy deitee.
Of that matere ye get no more of me.
Tell on thy tale, Manciple, I thee pray.
Wel, sire, quod he, now herkeneth what I say.

THE MANCIPLES TALE.

Whan Phebus dwelled here in erth adoun,
As olde bookes maken mentioun,
He was the moste lusty bacheler
Of all this world, and eke the best archer.
He slow Phiton the serpent, as he lay
Sleping agains the sonne upon a day;
And many another noble worthy dede
He with his bow wrought, as men mowen rede.
Playen he coude on every minstralcie,
And singen, that it was a melodie
To heren of his clere vois the soun.
Certes the king of Thebes, Amphioun,
That with his singing walled the citee,
Coud never singen half so wel as he.
Therto he was the semelieste man,
That is or was, sithen the world began;
What nedeth it his feture to descrive?
For in this world n'is non so faire on live.
He was therwith fulfilled of gentillesse,
Of honour, and of parfite worthinesse.
This Phebus, that was flour of bachelerie,
As wel in fredom, as in chivalrie,
For his disport, in signe eke of victorie
Of Phiton, so as telleth us the storie,
Was wont to beren in his hond a bowe.
Now had this Phebus in his hous a crowe,
Which in a cage he fostred many a day,
And taught it speken, as men teche a jay.
Whit was this crowe, as is a snow-whit swan,
And contrefete the speche of every man
He coude, whan he shulde tell a tale.
Therwith in all this world no nightingale
Ne coude by an hundred thousand del
Singen so wonder merily and wel.
Now had this Phebus in his hous a wif,
Which that he loved more than his lif,
And night and day did ever his diligence
Hire for to plese, and don hire reverence:
Save only, if that I the soth shal sain,
Jelous he was, and wold have kept hire fain,
For him were loth yjaped for to be;
And so is every wight in swiche degree;
But all for nought, for it availeth nought.
A good wif, that is clene of werk and thought,
Shuld not be kept in non awaitt certain:
And trewely the labour is in vain
To kepe a shrewe, for it wol not be.
This hold I for a veray nicetee,
To spillen labour for to kepen wives;
Thus writen olde clerkes in hir lives.
But now to purpos, as I first began.
This worthy Phebus doth all that he can
To plesen hire, wening thurgh swiche plesance,
And for his manhood and his governance,
That no man shulde put him from hire grace
But God it wote, ther may no man embrace
As to destreine a thing, which that nature
Hath naturelly set in a creature.
Take any brid, and put it in a cage,
And do all thin entente, and thy corage,
To foster it tendrely with mete and drinke
Of alle deintees that thou canst bethinke,
And kepe it al so clenely as thou may;
Although the cage of gold be never so gay,
Yet had this brid, by twenty thousand fold,
Lever in a forest, that is wilde and cold,

Gon eten wormes, and swiche wretchednesse.
For ever this brid will don his besinesse
To escape out of his cage whan that he may :
His libertee the brid desireth ay.
Let take a cat, and foster hire with milke
And tendre flesh, and make hire couche of silke,
And let hire see a mous go by the wall,
Anon she weiveth milke and flesh, and all,
And every deintee that is in that hous,
Swiche appetit hath she to ete the mous.
Lo, here hath kind hire domination,
And appetit flemeth discretion.
A she-wolf hath also a vilains kind ;
The lewedeste wolf that she may find,
Or lest of reputation, wol she take
In time whan hire lust to have a make.
All thise ensamples speke I by thise men
That ben untrewe, and nothing by women.
For men have ever a likerous appetit
On lower thing to parforme hir delit
Than on hir wives, be they never so faire,
Ne never so trewe, ne so debonaire.
Flesh is so newefangle, with meschance,
That we ne con in nothing have plesance
That souneth unto vertue any while.
This Phebus, which that thought upon no gile,
Disceived was for all his jolitee :
For under him another hadde she,
A man of litel reputation,
Nought worth to Phebus in comparison :
The more harme is ; it happeth often so ;
Of which ther cometh mochel harme and wo.
And so befell, whan Phebus was absent,
His wif anon hath for hire lemman sent.
Hire lemman ! certes that is a knavish speche.
Foryeve it me, and that I you beseche.
The wise Plato sayth, as ye mow rede,
The word must nede accorden with the dede,
If men shul tellen proprely a thing,
The word must cosin be to the werking.
I am a boistous man, right thus say I ;
Ther is no difference trewely
Betwix a wif that is of high degree,
(If of hire body dishonest she be)
And any poure wenche, other than this,
(If it so be they werken both amis)
But, for the gentil is in estat above,
She shal be cleped his lady and his love ;
And, for that other is a poure woman,
She shal be cleped his wenche and his lemman :
And God it wote, min owen dere brother,
Men lay as low that on as lith that other.
Right so betwix a titeles tiraunt
And an outlawe, or elles a thefe erraunt,
The same I say, ther is no difference,
(To Alexander told was this sentence)
But, for the tyrant is of greter might
By force of meinie for to sle doun right,
And brennen hous and home, and make all plain,
Lo, therfore is he cleped a capitain ;
And, for the outlawe hath but smale meinie,
And may not do so gret an harme as he,
Ne bring a contree to so gret meschiefe,
Men clepen him an outlawe or a thefe.
But, for I am a man not textuel,
I wol not tell of textes never a del ;
I wol go to my tale, as I began.
Whan Phebus wif had sent for hire lemman,
Anon they wroughten all hir lust volage.
This white crowe, that heng ay in the cage,
Beheld hir werke, and sayde never a word :
And whan that home was come Phebus the lord,
This crowe song, cuckow, cuckow, cuckow.
What ! brid, quod Phebus, what song singest thou now ?
Ne were thou wont so merily to sing,
That to my herte it was a rejoysing
To here thy vois ! alas ! what song is this ?
By God, quod he, I singe not amis.
Phebus, (quod he) for all thy worthinesse,
For all thy beautee, and all thy gentillesse,
For all thy song, and all thy minstralcie,
For all thy waiting, blered is thin eye,
With on of litel reputation,
Not worth to thee as in comparison
The mountance of a gnat, so mote I thrive ;
For on thy bedde thy wif I saw him swive.
What wol you more ! the crowe anon him told,
By sade tokenes, and by wordes bold,
How that his wif had don hire lecherie
Him to gret shame, and to gret vilanie ;
And told him oft, he sawe it with his eyen.
This Phebus gan awayward for to wrien ;
Him thought his woful herte brast atwo.
His bowe he bent, and set therin a flo ;
And in his ire he hath his wif yslain :
This is the effect, ther is no more to sain.
For sorwe of which he brake his minstralcie,
Both harpe and lute, giterne, and sautrie ;
And eke he brake his arwes, and his bowe ;
And after that thus spake he to the crowe.
Traitour, quod he, with tonge of scorpion,
Thou hast me brought to my confusion :
Alas that I was wrought ! why n'ere I dede ?
O dere wif, o gemme of lustyhede,
That were to me so sade, and eke so trewe,
Now liest thou ded, with face pale of hewe,
Ful gilteles, that durst I swere ywis.
O rakel hond, to do so foule a mis.
O troubled wit, o ire recheles,
That unavised smitest gilteles.
O wantrust, ful of false suspecion,
Wher was thy wit and thy discretion ?
O, every man beware of rakelnesse,
Ne trowe no thing withouten strong witnesse,
Smite not to sone, er that ye weten why,
And beth avised wel and sikerly,
Or ye do any execution
Upon your ire for suspecion.
Alas ! a thousand folk hath rakel ire
Fully fordon, and brought hem in the mire.
Alas ! for sorwe I wol myselven sle.
And to the crowe, o false thefe, said he,
I wol thee quite anon thy false tale.
Thou song whilom, like any nightingale,
Now shalt thou, false thefe, thy song forgon,
And eke thy white fethers, everich on,
Ne never in all thy lif ne shalt thou speke ;
Thus shul men on a traitour ben awreke.
Thou and thin ofspring ever shul be blake,
Ne never swete noise shul ye make,
But ever crie ageins tempest and rain,
In token, that thurgh thee my wif is slain.
And to the crowe he stert, and that anon,
And pulled his white fethers everich on,
And made him blak, and raft him all his song
And eke his speche, and out at dore him flong
Unto the devil, which I him betake ;
And for this cause ben alle crowes blake.
Lordings, by this ensample, I you pray,

Beth ware, and taketh kepe what that ye say;
Ne telleth never man in all your lif,
How that another man hath dight his wif;
He wol you haten mortally certain.
Dan Salomon, as wise clerkes sain,
Techeth a man to kepe his tonge wel;
But as I sayd, I am not textuel.
But natheles thus taughte me my dame;
My sone, thinke on the crowe a Goddes name.
My sone, kepe wel thy tonge, and kepe thy frend;
A wicked tonge is werse than a fend:
My sone, from a fende men may hem blesse.
My sone, God of his endeles goodnesse
Walled a tonge with teeth, and lippes eke,
For man shuld him avisen what he speke.
My sone, ful often for to mochel speche
Hath many a man ben spilt, as clerkes teche;
But for a litel speche avisedly
Is no man shent, to speken generally.
My sone, thy tonge shuldest thou restreine
At alle time, but whan thou dost thy peine
To speke of God in honour and prayere.
The firste vertue, sone, if thou wolt lere,
Is to restreine, and kepen wel thy tonge;
Thus leren children, whan that they be yonge.
My sone, of mochel speking evil avised,
Ther lesse speking had ynough suffised,
Cometh mochel harme; thus was me told and taught;
In mochel speche sinne wanteth naught.
Wost thou wherof a rakel tongo serveth?
Right as a swerd forcutteth and forkerveth
An arme atwo, my dere sone, right so
A tonge cutteth frendship all atwo.
A jangler is to God abhominable.
Rede Salomon, so wise and honourable,
Rede David in his Psalmes, rede Senek.
My sone, speke not, but with thyn hed thou beck,
Dissimule as thou were defe, if that thou here
A janglour speke of perilous matere.
The Fleming sayth, and lerne if that thee lest,
That litel jangling causeth mochel rest.
My sone, if thou no wicked word hast said,
Thee thar not dreden for to be bewraid;
But he that hath missayd, I dare wel sain,
He may by no way clepe his word again.
Thing that is sayd is sayd, and forth it goth,
Though him repent, or be him never so loth,
He is his thral, to whom that he hath sayd
A tale, of which he is now evil apaid.
My sone, beware, and be non auctour newe
Of tidings, whether they ben false or trewe;
Wher so thou come, amonges high or lowe,
Kepe wel thy tonge, and thinke upon the crowe.

THE PERSONES TALE.

THE PERSONES PROLOGUE.

By that the Manciple had his tale ended,
The sonne fro the south line was descended
So lowe, that it ne was not to my sight
Degrees nine and twenty as of hight.
Foure of the clok it was tho, as I gesse,
For enleven foot, a litel more or lesse,
My shadow was at thilke time, as there,
Of swiche feet as my lengthe parted were
In six feet equal of proportion.
Therwith the mones exaltation,
In mene Libra, alway gan ascende,
As we were entring at the thorpes ende.
For which our hoste, as he was wont to gie,
As in this cas, our jolly compagnie,
Said in this wise; lordings, everich on,
Now lacketh us no tales mo than on.
Fulfilled is my sentence and my decree;
I trowe that we han herd of eche degree.
Almost fulfilled is myn ordinance;
I pray to God so yeve him right good chance,
That telleth us this tale lustily.
Sire preest, quod he, art thou a vicary?
Or art thou a Person? say soth by thy fay.
Be what thou be, ne breke thou not our play;
For every man, save thou, hath told his tale.
Unbokel, and shew us what is in thy male.
For trewely me thinketh by thy chere,
Thou shuldest knitte up wel a gret matere.
Tell us a fable anon, for cockes bones.
This Person him answered al at ones;
Thou getest fable non ytold for me,
For Poule, that writeth unto Timothe,
Repreveth hem that weiven sothfastnesse,
And tellen fables, and swiche wretchednesse.
Why shuld I sowen draf out of my fist,
Whan I may sowen whete, if that me list?
For which I say, if that you list to here
Moralitee, and vertuous matere,
And than that ye wol yeve me audience,
I wold ful fain at Cristes reverence
Don you plesance leful, as I can.
But trusteth wel, I am a sotherne man,
I cannot geste, rom, ram, ruf, by my letter,
And, God wote, rime hold I but litel better.
And therfore if you list, I wol not glose,
I wol you tell a litel tale in prose,
To knitte up all this feste, and make an ende:
And Jesu for his grace wit me sende
To shewen you the way in this viage
Of thilke parfit glorious pilgrimage,
That hight Jerusalem celestial.
And if ye vouchesauf, anon I shal
Beginne upon my tale, for which I pray
Tell your avis, I can no better say.
But natheles this meditation
I put it ay under correction
Of clerkes, for I am not textuel;
I take but the sentence, trusteth me wel.
Therfore I make a protestation,
That I wol standen to correction.
Upon this word we han assented sone:
For, as us semed, it was for to don,
To enden in som vertuous sentence,
And for to yeve him space and audience;

And bade our hoste he shulde to him say,
That alle we to tell his tale him pray.
Our hoste had the wordes for us alle:
Sire preest, quod he, now faire you befalle;
Say what you list, and we shul gladly here.
And with that word he said in this manere;
Telleth, quod he, your meditatioun,
But hasteth you, the sonne wol adoun.
Beth fructuous, and that in litel space,
And to do wel God sende you his grace.

THE PERSONES TALE.

Our swete Lord God of heven, that no man wol perish, but wol that we comen all to the knowleching of him, and to the blisful lif that is pardurable, amonesteth us by the Prophet Jeremie, that sayth in this wise: Stondeth upon the wayes, and seeth and axeth of the olde pathes; that is to say, of olde sentences; which is the good way: and walketh in that way, and ye shul finde refreshing for your soules. Many ben the wayes spirituel that leden folk to our Lord Jesu Crist, and to the regne of glory: of which wayes, ther is a ful noble way, and wel covenable, which may not faille to man ne to woman, that thurgh sinne hath misgon fro the right way of Jerusalem celestial; and this way is cleped penance; of which man shuld gladly herken and enqueren with all his herte, to wete, what is penance, and whennes it is cleped penance, and how many maneres ben of actions or werkings of penance, and how many spices ther ben of penance, and which thinges apperteinen and behoven to penance, and which thinges distroublen penance.

Seint Ambrose sayth, That penance is the plaining of man for the gilt that he hath don, and no more to do any thing for which him ought to plaine. And som doctour sayth: Penance is the waymenting of man that sorweth for his sinne, and peineth himself, for he hath misdon. Penance, with certain circumstances, is veray repentance of man, that holdeth himself in sorwe and other peine for his giltes: and for he shal be veray penitent, he shal first bewailen the sinnes that he hath don, and stedfastly purposen in his herte to have shrift of mouth, and to don satisfaction, and never to don thing, for which him ought more to bewayle or complaine, and to continue in good werkes: or elles his repentance may not availe. For as Seint Isidor sayth; he is a japer and a gabber, and not veray repentant, that eftsones doth thing, for which him oweth to repent. Weping, and not for to stint to do sinne, may not availe. But natheles, men shuld hope, that at every time that man falleth, be it never so oft, that he may arise thurgh penance, if he have grace: but certain, it is gret doute. For as saith Seint Gregorie; unnethes ariseth he out of sinne, that is charged with the charge of evil usage. And therfore repentant folk, that stint for to sinne, and forlete sinne or that sinne forlete hem, holy chirche holdeth hem siker of hir salvation. And he that sinneth, and veraily repenteth him in his last day, holy chirche yet hopeth his salvation, by the grete mercy of our Lord Jesu Crist, for his repentance: but take ye the siker and certain way.

And now sith I have declared you, what thing is penance, now ye shul understond, that ther ben three actions of penance. The first is, that a man be baptised after that he hath sinned. Seint Augustine sayth; but he be penitent for his old sinful lif, he may not beginne the newe clene lif: for certes, if he be baptised without penitence of his old gilt, he receiveth the marke of baptisme, but not the grace, ne the remission of his sinnes, til he have veray repentance. Another defaute is, that men don dedly sinne after that they have received baptisme. The thridde defaute is, that men fall in venial sinnes after hir baptisme, fro day to day. Therof sayth Seint Augustine, that penance of good and humble folk is the penance of every day.

The spices of penance ben three. That on of hem is solempne, another is commune, and the thridde privee. Thilke penance, that is solempne, is in two maneres; as to be put out of holy chirche in lenton, for slaughter of children, and swiche maner thing. Another is whan a man hath sinned openly, of which sinne the fame is openly spoken in the contree: and than holy chirche by jugement distreyneth him for to do open penance. Commun penance is, that preestes enjoinen men in certain cas: as for to go paraventure naked on pilgrimage, or bare foot. Privee penance is thilke, that men don all day for privee sinnes, of which we shrive us prively, and receive privee penance.

Now shalt thou understond what is behoveful and necessary to every parfit penance: and this stont on three thinges; contrition of herte, confession of mouth, and satisfaction. For which sayth Seint John Chrisostome: penance distreineth a man to accept benignely every peine, that him is enjoined, with contrition of herte, and shrift of mouth, with satisfaction, and werking of all maner humilitee. And this is fruitful penance avenst tho three thinges, in which we wrathen our Lord Jesu Crist: this is to say, by delit in thinking, by rechelesnesse in speking, and by wicked sinful werking. And ayenst these wicked giltes is penance, that may be likened unto a tree.

The rote of this tree is contrition, that hideth him in the herte of him that is veray repentant, right as the rote of the tree hideth him in the erthe. Of this rote of contrition springeth a stalke, that bereth branches and leves of confession, and fruit of satisfaction. Of which Crist sayth in his gospell; doth ye digne fruit of penitence; for by this fruit mow men understonde and knowe this tree, and not by the rote that is hid in the herte of man, ne by the branches, ne the leves of confession. And therfore our Lord Jesu Crist saith thus; by the fruit of hem shal ye knowe hem. Of this rote also springeth a seed of grace, which seed is moder of sikernesse, and this seed is eger and hote. The grace of this seed springeth of God, thurgh remembrance on the day of dome, and on the peines of helle. Of this matere saith Salomon, that in the drede of God man forletteth his sinne. The hete of this sede is the love of God, and the desiring of the joye perdurable. This hete draweth the herte of man to God, and doth him hate his sinne. For sothly, ther is nothing that savoureth so sote to a child, as the milke of his norice, ne nothing is to him more abhominable than that milke, whan it is

medled with other mete. Right so the sinful man that loveth his sinne, him semeth, that it is to him most swete of any thing; but fro that time that he loveth sadly our Lord Jesu Crist, and desireth the lif perdurable, ther is to him nothing more abhominable. For sothly the lawe of God is the love of God. For which David the prophet sayth; I have loved thy lawe, and hated wickednesse: he that loveth God, kepeth his lawe and his word. This tree saw the prophet Daniel in spirit, upon the vision of Nabuchodonosor, whan he counseiled him to do penance. Penance is the tree of lif, to hem that it receiven: and he that holdeth him in veray penance, is blisful, after the sentence of Salomon.

In this penance or contrition man shal understond foure thinges; that is to say, what is contrition; and which ben the causes that moven a man to contrition; and how he shuld be contrite; and what contrition availeth to the soule. Than is it thus, that contrition is the veray sorwe that a man receiveth in his herte for his sinnes, with sad purpos to shriven him, and to do penance, and never more to don sinne. And this sorwe shal be in this maner, as sayth Seint Bernard; it shal ben hevy and grevous, and ful sharpe and poinant in herte; first, for a man hath agilted his Lord and his creatour; and more sharpe and poinant, for he hath agilted his father celestial; and yet more sharpe and poinant, for he hath wrathed and agilted him that boughte him, that with his precious blod hath delivered us fro the bondes of sinne, and fro the crueltee of the devil, and fro the peines of helle.

The causes that ought to meve a man to contrition ben sixe. First, a man shal remembre him of his sinnes. But loke that that remembrance ne be to him no delit, by no way, but grete shame and sorwe for his sinnes. For Job sayth, sinful men don werkes worthy of confession. And therfore sayth Ezechiel; I wol remembre me all the yeres of my lif, in the bitternesse of my herte. And God sayth in the Apocalipse; remembre you fro whens that ye ben fall, for before the time that ye sinned, ye weren children of God, and limmes of the regne of God; but for your sinne ye ben waxen thral and foule; membres of the fende; hate of angels; sclaunder of holy chirche, and fode of the false serpent; perpetuel matere of the fire of helle; and yet more foule and abhominable, for ye trespassen so oft times, as doth the hound that torneth again to ete his owen spewing; and yet fouler, for your long continuing in sinne, and your sinful usage, for which ye be roten in your sinnes, as a beest in his donge. Swiche manere thoughtes make a man to have shame of his sinne, and no delit; as God saith, by the Prophet Ezechiel; ye shul remembre you of your wayes, and they shul displese you. Sothly, sinnes ben the waies that lede folk to hell.

The second cause that ought to make a man to have disdeigne of sinne is this, that, as saith Seint Peter, who so doth sinne, is thral to sinne, and sinne putteth a man in gret thraldom. And therfore sayth the Prophet Ezechiel; I went sorweful, and had disdeigne of myself. Certes, wel ought a man have disdeigne of sinne, and withdrawe him fro that thraldom and vilany. And lo, what sayth Seneke in this mater. He saith thus; though I wist, that neither God ne man shuld never know it, yet wold I have disdeigne for to do sinne. And the same Seneke also sayth: I am borne to greter thinges, than to be thral to my body, or for to make of my body a thral. Ne a fouler thral may no man, ne woman, make of his body, than for to yeve his body to sinne. Al were it the foulest chorle, or the foulest woman that liveth, and lest of value, yet is he than more foule, and more in servitude. Ever fro the higher degree that man falleth, the more is he thral, and more to God and to the world vile and abhominable. O good God, wel ought a man have disdeigne of sinne, sith that thurgh sinne, ther he was free, he is made bond. And therfore sayth Seint Augustine: if thou hast disdeigne of thy servant, if he offend or sinne, have thou than disdeigne, that thou thy self shuldest do sinne. Take reward of thin owen value, that thou ne be to foule to thyself. Alas! wel oughten they than have disdeigne to be servants and thralles to sinne, and sore to be ashamed of hemself, that God of his endles goodnesse hath sette in high estat, or yeve hem witte, strength of body, hele, beautee, or prosperitee, and bought hem fro the deth with his herte blood, that they so unkindly agains his gentillesse, quiten him so vilainsly, to slaughter of hir owen soules. O good God! ye women that ben of gret beautee, remembreth you on the proverbe of Salomon, that likeneth a faire woman, that is a fool of hire body, to a ring of gold that is worne in the groine of a sowe: for right as a sowe wroteth in every ordure, so wroteth she hire beautee in stinking ordure of sinne.

The thridde cause, that ought to meve a man to contrition, is drede of the day of dome, and of the horrible peines of helle. For as Seint Jerome sayth: at every time that me remembreth of the day of dome, I quake: for whan I ete or drinke, or do what so I do, ever semeth me that the trompe sowneth in min eres: riseth ye up that ben ded, and cometh to the jugement. O good God! moche ought a man to drede swiche a jugement, ther as we shul be alle, as Seint Poule sayth, before the streit jugement of oure Lord Jesu Crist; wheras he shal make a general congregation, wheras no man may be absent; for certes ther availeth non essoine ne non excusation; and not only, that our defautes shul be juged, but eke that all our werkes shul openly be knowen. And, as sayth Seint Bernard, ther ne shal no pleting availe, ne no sleight: we shal yeve rekening of everich idle word. Ther shal we have a juge that may not be deceived ne corrupt; and why? for certes, all our thoughtes ben discovered, as to him: ne for prayer, ne for mede, he wil not be corrupt. And therfore saith Salomon: the wrath of God ne wol not spare no wight, for prayer ne for yeft. And therfore at the day of dome ther is non hope to escape. Wherfore, as sayth Seint Anselme, ful gret anguish shal the sinful folk have at that time: ther shal be the sterne and wroth juge sitting above, and under him the horrible pitte of helle open, to destroy him that wolde not beknowen his sinnes, which sinnes shullen openly be shewed before God and before every creature: and on the left side, mo Divels than any herte may thinke, for to hary and drawe the sinful soules to the pitte of helle: and within the hertes of folk shal be the biting conscience, and without forth shal be the world all brenning. Whither than shal the wretched soule flee to hide him? Certes he may not hide him, he must come forth and shewe him. For certes, as saith Seint

Jerome, the erth shal cast him out of it, and the see, and also the aire, that shal be ful of thonder clappes and lightnings. Now sothly, who so wil remembre him of these thinges, I gesse that his sinnes shal not torne him to delit, but to grete sorwe, for drede of the peine of helle. And therfore saith Job to God: suffer, Lord, that I may a while bewaile and bewepe, or I go without retorning to the derke londe, ycovered with the derkenesse of deth; to the londe of misese and of derkenesse, wheras is the shadowe of deth; wheras is non ordre ne ordinance, but grisly drede that ever shal last. Lo, here may ye see, that Job prayed respite a while, to bewepe and waile his trespas: for sothely on day of respite is better than all the tresour of this world. And for as moche as a man may acquite himself before God by penitence in this world, and not by tresour, therfore shuld he pray to God to yeve him respite a while, to bewepen and bewailen his trespas: for certes, all the sorwe that a man might make fro the beginning of the world, n'is but a litel thing, at regard of the sorwe of helle. The cause why that Job clepeth helle the londe of derkenesse; understondeth, that he clepeth it londe or erth, for it is stable and never shal faile; and derke, for he that is in helle hath defaute of light naturel; for certes the derke light, that shal come out of the fire that ever shal brenne, shall torne hem all to peine that be in helle, for it sheweth hem the horrible Divels that hem turmenten. Covered with the derkenesse of deth; that is to say, that he that is in helle, shal have defaute of the sight of God; for certes the sight of God is the lif perdurable. The derknesse of deth, ben the sinnes that the wretched man hath don, which that distroublen him to see the face of God, right as a derke cloud betwene us and the sonne. It is londe of misese, because that ther ben three maner of defautes ayenst three thinges that folk of this world han in this present lif; that is to say, honoures, delites, and richesses. Ayenst honour have they in helle shame and confusion: for wel ye wote, that men clepen honour the reverence that man doth to man; but in helle is non honour ne reverence; for certes no more reverence shal be don ther to a king, than to a knave. For which God sayth by the Prophet Jeremie; the folk, that me despisen, shal be in despite. Honour is also cleped gret lordeship. Ther shal no wight serven other, but of harme and turment. Honour is also cleped gret dignitee and highnesse; but in helle shal they be alle fortroden of divels. As God saith; the horrible Divels shul gon and comen upon the hedes of dampned folk: and this is, for as moche as the higher that they were in this present lif, the more shul they be abated and defouled in helle. Ayenst the richesse of this world shul they have misese of poverte, and this poverte shal be in foure thinges: in defaute of tresour; of which David sayth; the riche folk that enbraceden and oneden all hir herte to tresour of this world, shul slepe in the sleping of deth, and nothing ne shul they find in hir hondes of all hir tresour. And moreover, the misese of helle shal be in defaute of mete and drink. For God sayth thus by Moyses: they shul be wasted with honger, and the briddes of helle shul devoure hem with bitter deth, and the gall of the dragon shal ben hir drinke, and the venime of the dragon hir morsels. And further over hir misese shal be in defaute of clothing, for they shul be naked in body, as of clothing, save the fire in which they brenne, and other filthes; and naked shul they be in soule, of all maner vertues, which that is the clothing of the soule. Wher ben than the gay robes, and softe shetes, and the fyn shertes? Lo, what sayth God of heven by the Prophet Esaie, that under hem shul be strewed mothes, and hir covertures shul ben of wormes of helle. And further over hir misese shal be in defaute of frendes, for he is not poure that hath good frendes: but ther is no frend; for neither God ne no good creature shal be frend to hem, and everich of hem shal hate other with dedly hate. The sonnes and the doughters shal rebel ayenst father and mother, and kinred ayenst kinred, and chiden and despisen eche other, both day and night, as God sayth by the Prophet Micheas. And the loving children, that whilom loveden so fleshly, everich of hem wold eten other if they might. For how shuld they love togeder in the peines of helle, whan they hated eche other in the prosperitee of this lif? For truste wel, hir fleshly love was dedly hate. As saith the Prophet David: who so that loveth wickednesse, he hateth his owen soule, and who so hateth his owen soule, certes he may love non other wight in no manere: and therfore in helle is no solace ne no frendship, but ever the more kinredes that ben in helle, the more cursing, the more chiding, and the more dedly hate ther is among hem. And further over ther they shul have defaute of all maner delites, for certes delites ben after the appetites of the five wittes, as sight, hering, smelling, savouring, and touching. But in helle hir sight shal be ful of derkenesse and of smoke, and hir eyen ful of teres; and hir hering ful of waimenting and grinting of teeth, as sayth Jesu Crist: hir nosethirles shul be ful of stinking; and, as saith Esay the Prophet, hir savouring shal be ful of bitter galle; and touching of all hir body, shal be covered with fire that never shal quenche, and with wormes that never shal die, as God sayth by the mouth of Esay. And for as moche as they shul not wene that they mow dien for peine, and by deth flee fro peine, that mow they understonde in the word of Job, that sayth; Ther is the shadow of deth. Certes a shadowe hath likenesse of the thing of which it is shadowed, but shadowe is not the same thing of which it is shadowed: right so fareth the peine of helle; it is like deth, for the horrible anguish; and why? for it peineth hem ever as though they shuld die anon; but certes they shul not dien. For as sayth Seint Gregory; To wretched caitifes shal be deth withouten deth, and ende withouten ende, and defaute withouten failing; for hir deth shal alway live, and hir ende shal ever more beginne, and hir defaute shal never faile. And therfore sayth Seint John the Evangelist; They shul folow deth, and they shul not finde him, and they shul desire to die, and deth shal flee from hem. And eke Job saith, that in helle is non ordre of rule. And al be it so, that God hath create all thing in right ordre, and nothing withouten ordre, but all thinges ben ordred and nombred, yet natheles they that ben dampned ben nothing in ordre, ne hold non ordre. For the erth shal bere hem no fruite; (for, as the Prophet David sayeth, God shal destroy the fruite of the erth, as fro hem) ne water shal yeve hem no moisture, ne the aire no refreshing,

ne the fire no light. For as sayth Seint Basil; The brenning of the fire of this world shal God yeve in helle to hem that ben dampned, but the light and the clerenesse shal be yeve in heven to his children; right as the good man yeveth flesh to his children, and bones to his houndes. And for they shul have non hope to escape, sayth Job at last, that ther shal horrour and grisly drede dwellen withouten ende. Horrour is alway drede of harme that is to come, and this drede shal alway dwell in the hertes of hem that ben dampned. And therfore han they lorne all hir hope for seven causes. First, for God that is hir juge shal be withouten mercie to hem; and they may not plese him; ne non of his halwes; ne they may yeve nothing for hir raunsom; ne they have no vois to speke to him; ne they may not flee fro peine; ne they have no goodnesse in hem that they may shew to deliver hem fro peine. And therfore sayth Salomon; The wicked man dieth, and whan he is ded, he shal have non hope to escape fro peine. Who so than wold wel understonde these peines, and bethinke him wel that he hath deserved these peines for his sinnes, certes he shulde have more talent to sighen and to wepe, than for to singe and playe. For as sayth Salomon; Who so that had the science to know the peines that ben established and ordeined for sinne, he wold forsake sinne. That science, saith Seint Austin, maketh a man to waimenten in his herte.

The fourthe point, that oughte make a man have contrition, is the sorweful remembrance of the good dedes that he hath lefte to don here in erthe, and also the good that he hath lorne. Sothly the good werkes that he hath lefte, either they be the good werkes that he wrought er he fell into dedly sinne, or elles the good werkes that he wrought while he lay in sinne. Sothly the good werkes that he did before that he fell in dedly sinne, ben all mortified, astoned, and dulled by the eft sinning: the other werkes that he wrought while he lay in sinne, they ben utterly ded, as to the lif perdurable in heven. Than thilke good werkes that ben mortified by eft sinning, which he did while he was in charitee, moun never quicken ayen without veray penitence. And therof sayth God by the mouth of Ezechiel; if the rightful man retorne again fro his rightwisnesse and do wickednesse, shal he liven? nay; for all the good werkes that he hath wrought, shul never be in remembrance, for he shal die in his sinne. And upon thilke chapitre sayth Seint Gregorie thus; that we shal understonde this principally, that when we don dedly sinne, it is for nought than to remembre or drawe into memorie the good werkes that we have wrought beforn: for certes in the werking of dedly sinne, ther is no trust in no good werk that we have don beforn; that is to say, as for to have therby the lif perdurable in heven. But natheles, the good werkes quicken again and comen again, and helpe and availe to have the lif perdurable in heven, whan we have contrition: but sothly the good werkes that men don while they ben in dedly sinne, for as moche as they were don in dedly sinne, they may never quicken: for certes, thing that never had lif, may never quicken: and natheles, al be it so that they availen not to have the lif perdurable, yet availen they to abreggen the peine of helle, or elles to get temporal richesses, or elles that God wol the rather enlumine or light the herte of the sinful man to have repentance; and eke they availen for to usen a man to do good werkes, that the fende have the lesse power of his soule. And thus the curteis Lord Jesu Crist ne woll that no good werk that men don be loste, for in somwhat it shal availe. But for as moche as the good werkes that men don while they ben in good lif, ben all amortised by sinne folowing, and eke sith all the good werkes that men don while they ben in dedly sinne, ben utterly ded, as for to have the lif perdurable, wel may that man, that no good werk ne doth, sing thilke newe Frenshe song, *J'ay tout perdu mon temps, et mon labour.* For certes sinne bereveth a man both goodnesse of nature, and eke the goodnesse of grace. For sothly the grace of the holy gost fareth like fire that may not ben idle; for fire faileth anon as it forletteth his werking, and right so grace faileth anon as it forletteth his werking. Than leseth the sinful man the goodnesse of glorie, that only is hight to good men that labouren and werken wel. Wel may he be sory than, that oweth all his lif to God, as long as he hath lived, and also as long as he shal live, that no goodnesse ne hath to paie with his dette to God, to whom he oweth all his lif: for trust wel he shal yeve accomptes, as sayth Seint Bernard, of all the goodes that han ben yeven him in this present lif, and how he hath hem dispended, in so moche that ther shal not perishe an here of his hed, ne a moment of an houre ne shal not perishe of his time, that he ne shal yeve therof a rekening.

The fifthe thing, that ought to meve a man to contrition, is remembrance of the passion that our Lord Jesu Crist suffered for our sinnes. For as sayth Seint Bernard, While that I live, I shal have remembrance of the travailes that our Lord Jesu Crist suffered in preching, his werinesse in traveling, his temptations whan he fasted, his long wakinges whan he prayed, his teres whan he wept for pitee of good peple: the wo and the shame, and the filthe that men sayden to him: of the foule spitting that men spitten in his face, of the buffettes that men yave him: of the foule mouthes and of the foule repreves that men saiden to him: of the nayles with which he was nailed to the crosse; and of all the remenant of his passion, that he suffred for mannes sinne, and nothing for his gilte. And here ye shul understand that in mannes sinne is every maner order, or ordinance, tourned up so doun. For it is soth, that God and reson, and sensualitee, and the body of man, ben ordained, that everich of thise foure thinges shuld have lordship over that other: as thus; God shuld have lordship over reson, and reson over sensualitee, and sensualitee over the body of man. But sothly whan man sinneth, all this ordre, or ordinance, is turned up so doun; and therfore than, for as moche as reson of man ne wol not be subget ne obeisant to God, that is his lord by right, therfore leseth it the lordship that it shuld have over sensualitee, and eke over the body of man; and why? for sensualitee rebelleth than ayenst reson: and by that way leseth reson the lordship over sensualitee, and over the body. For right as reson is rebel to God, right so is sensualitee rebel to reson, and the body also. And certes this disordinance, and this rebellion, our

Lord Jesu Crist abought upon his precious body ful dere: and herkeneth in whiche wise. For as moche as reson is rebel to God, therfore is man worthy to have sorwe, and to be ded. This suffred our Lord Jesu Crist for man, after that he had be betraied of his disciple, and distreined and bounde, so that his blood brast out at every nail of his hondes, as saith Seint Augustin. And ferthermore, for as moche as reson of man wol not daunt sensualitee whan it may, therfore is man worthy to have shame: and this suffered our Lord Jesu Crist for man, whan they spitten in his visage. And fertherover, for as moche as the caitif body of man is rebel both to reson and to sensualitee, therfore it is worthy the deth: and this suffered our Lord Jesu Crist upon the crosse, wheras ther was no part of his body free, without grete peine and bitter passion. And all this suffred our Lord Jesu Crist that never forfaited; and thus sayd he: To mochel am I peined, for thinges that I never deserved: and to moche defouled for shendship that man is worthy to have. And therfore may the sinful man wel say, as sayth Seint Bernard: Accursed be the bitternesse of my sinne, for whiche ther must be suffered so moche bitternesse. For certes, after the divers discordance of our wickednesse was the passion of Jesu Crist ordeined in divers thinges; as thus. Certes sinful mannes soule is betraied of the divel, by coveitise of temporel prosperitee; and scorned by disceite, whan he cheseth fleshly delites; and yet it is turmented by impatience of adversitee, and bespet by servage and subjection of sinne; and at the last it is slain finally. For this discordance of sinful man, was Jesu Crist first betraied; and after that was he bounde, that came for to unbinde us of sinne and of peine. Than was he bescorned, that only shuld have ben honoured in alle thinges and of alle thinges. Than was his visage, that ought to be desired to be seen of all mankind (in which visage angels desiren to loke) vilainsly bespet. Than was he scourged that nothing had trespassed; and finally, than was he crucified and slain. Than were accomplished the wordes of Esaie: He was wounded for our misdedes, and defouled for our felonies. Now sith that Jesu Crist toke on himself the peine of all our wickednesses, moche ought sinful man to wepe and to bewaile, that for his sinnes Goddes sone of heven shuld all this peine endure.

The sixte thing, that shuld move a man to contrition, is the hope of three thinges, that is to say, foryevenesse of sinne, and the yeft of grace for to do wel, and the glorie of heven, with whiche God shal guerdon man for his good dedes. And for as moche as Jesu Crist yeveth us thise yeftes of his largenesse, and of his soveraine bountee, therfore he is cleped, *Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judæorum.* Jesus is for to say, saviour or salvation, on whom men shul hopen to have foryevenesse of sinnes, which that is proprely salvation of sinnes. And therfore sayd the Angel to Joseph, Thou shalt clepe his name Jesus, that shal saven his peple of hir sinnes. And hereof saith Seint Peter; Ther is non other name under heven, that is yeven to any man, by which a man may be saved, but only Jesus. Nazarenus is as moche for to say, as flourishing, in which a man shal hope, that he, that yeveth him remission of sinnes, shal yeve him also grace wel for to do: for in the flour is hope of fruit in time coming, and in foryevenesse of sinnes hope of grace wel to do. I was at the dore of thin herte, sayth Jesus, and cleped for to enter. He that openeth to me, shal have foryevenesse of his sinnes, and I wol enter into him by my grace, and soupe with him by the good werkes that he shal don, which werkes ben the food of God, and he shal soupe with me by the gret joye that I shal yeve him. Thus shal man hope, that for his werkes of penance God shal yeve him his regne, as he behight him in the Gospel.

Now shal man understande, in which maner shal be his contrition. I say, that it shal be universal and total; this is to say, a man shal be veray repentant for all his sinnes, that he hath don in delite of his thought, for delite is perilous. For ther ben two maner of consentinges; that on of hem is cleped consenting of affection, whan a man is meved to do sinne, and than deliteth him longe for to thinke on that sinne, and his reson apperceiveth it wel, that it is sinne ayenst the lawe of God, and yet his reson refraineth not his foule delite or talent, though he see wel apertly, that it is ayenst the reverence of God: although his reson consent not to do that sinne indede, yet sayn som doctours, that swiche delite that dwelleth longe is ful perilous, al be it never so lite. And also a man shuld sorow, namely for all that ever he hath desired ayenst the lawe of God, with parfite consenting of his reson, for therof is no doute, that it is dedly sinne in consenting: for certes ther is no dedly sinne, but that it is first in mannes thought, and after that in his delite, and so forth into consenting, and into dede. Wherfore I say, that many men ne repent hem never of swiche thoughtes and delites, ne never shriven hem of it, but only of the dede of gret sinnes outward: wherfore I say, that swiche wicked delites ben subtil begilers of hem that shul be dampned. Moreover man ought to sorwen for his wicked wordes, as wel as for his wicked dedes: for certes repentance of a singuler sinne, and not repentant of all his other sinnes; or elles repenting him of all his other sinnes, and not of a singuler sinne, may not availe. For certes God Almighty is all good; and therfore, either he foryeveth all, or elles right nought. And therfore sayth Seint Augustin: I wote certainly, that God is enemy to every sinner: and how than? he that observeth on sinne, shal he have foryevenesse of the remenant of his other sinnes? Nay. And furtherover contrition shuld be wonder sorweful and anguishous: and therfore yeveth him God plainly his mercie: and therfore whan my soule was anguishous, and sorweful within me, than had I remembrance of God, that my praier might come to him. Furtherover contrition muste be continuel, and that man have stedfast purpose to shrive him, and to amend him of his lif. For sothly, while contrition lasteth, man may ever hope to have foryevenesse. And of this cometh hate of sinne, that destroyeth sinne bothe in himself, and eke in other folk at his power. For which sayth David; they that love God, hate wickednesse: for to love God, is for to love that he loveth, and hate that he hateth.

The last thing that men shull understand in contrition is this, wherof availeth contrition. I say, that contrition somtime delivereth man fro sinne: of which David saith; I say, (quod

David) I purposed fermely to shrive me, and thou Lord relesedest my sinne. And right so as contrition availeth not without sad purpos of shrift and satisfaction, right so litel worth is shrift or satisfaction withouten contrition. And moreover contrition destroyeth the prison of helle, and maketh weke and feble all the strengthes of the Devils, and restoreth the yeftes of the holy gost, and of all good vertues, and it clenseth the soule of sinne, and delivereth it fro the peine of helle, and fro the compagnie of the Devil, and fro the servage of sinne, and restoreth it to all goodes spirituel, and to the compagnie and communion of holy chirche. And furtherover it maketh him, that whilom was sone of ire, to be the sone of grace: and all these thinges ben preved by holy writ. And therfore he that wold set his entent to thise thinges, he were ful wise: for sothly he ne shuld have than in all his lif corage to sinne, but yeve his herte and body to the service of Jesu Crist, and therof do him homage. For certes our Lord Jesu Crist hath spared us so benignely in our folies, that if he ne had pitee on mannes soule, a sory song might we alle singe.

Explicit prima pars penitentiæ; et incipit pars secunda.

The second part of penitence is confession, and that is signe of contrition. Now shul ye understonde what is confession; and whether it ought nedes to be don or non: and which thinges ben covenable to veray confession.

First shalt thou understande, that confession is veray shewing of sinnes to the preest; this is to saie veray, for he must confesse him of all the conditions that belongen to his sinne, as ferforth as he can: all must be sayd, and nothing excused, ne hid, ne forwrapped; and not avaunt him of his good werkes. Also it is necessarie to understande whennes that sinnes springen, and how they encresen, and which they ben.

Of springing of sinnes saith Seint Poule in this wise: that right as by on man sinne entred first into this world, and thurgh sinne deth, right so deth entreth into alle men that sinnen: and this man was Adam, by whom sinne entred into this world, whan he brake the commandement of God. And therfore he that first was so mighty, that he ne shuld have died, became swiche on that he must nedes die, whether he wold or no; and all his progenie in this world, that in thilke maner sinnen, dien. Loke that in the estat of innocence, whan Adam and Eve weren naked in paradise, and no thing ne hadden shame of hir nakednesse, how that the serpent, that was most wily of all other bestes that God had made, sayd to the woman: why commanded God you, that ye shuld not ete of every tree in Paradise? The woman answered: of the fruit, sayd she, of the trees of Paradise we feden us, but of the fruit of the tree that is in the middel of Paradise God forbode us for to eten, ne to touche it, lest we shuld die. The serpent sayd to the woman: nay, nay, ye shul not dien of deth; for soth God wote, that what day that ye ete therof your eyen shul open, and ye shul be as goddes, knowing good and harme. The woman saw that the tree was good to feding, and faire to the eyen, and delectable to the sight; she toke of the fruit of the tree and did ete, and yave to hire husbond, and he ete; and anon the eyen of hem both opened: and whan they knewe that they were naked, they sowed of a fig-tree leves in maner of breches, to hiden hir members. Here mow ye seen, that dedly sinne hath first suggestion of the fende, as sheweth here by the adder; and afterward the delit of the flesh, as sheweth here by Eve; and after that the consenting of reson, as sheweth by Adam. For trust wel, though so it were, that the fende tempted Eve, that is to say, the flesh, and the flesh had delit in the beautee of the fruit defended, yet certes til that reson, that is to say, Adam, consented to the eting of the fruit, yet stode he in the state of innocence. Of thilke Adam toke we thilke sinne original; from him fleshly discended be we all, and engendred of vile and corrupt mater: and whan the soule is put in our bodies, right anon is contract original sinne; and that, that was erst but only peine of concupiscence, is afterward both peine and sinne: and therfore we ben all yborne sones of wrath, and of dampnation perdurable, if ne were Baptisme that we receive, which benimeth us the culpe: but forsoth the peine dwelleth with us as to temptation, which peine hight concupiscence. This concupiscence, whan it is wrongfully disposed or ordeined in man, it maketh him coveit, by coveitise of flesh, fleshly sinne by sight of his eyen, as to erthly thinges, and also coveitise of highnesse by pride of herte.

Now as to speke of the first coveitise, that is concupiscence, after the lawe of our membres, that were lawfully ymaked, and by rightful jugement of God, I say, for as moche as a man is not obeisant to God, that is his Lord, therfore is his herte to him disobeisant thurgh concupiscence, which is called nourishing of sinne, and occasion of sinne. Therfore, all the while that a man hath within him the peine of concupiscence, it is impossible, but he be tempted somtime, and moved in his flesh to sinne. And this thing may not faile, as long as he liveth. It may wel waxe feble by vertue of Baptisme, and by the grace of God thurgh penitence; but fully ne shal it never quenche, that he ne shal somtime be meved in himselfe, but if he were refreined by sikenesse, or malefice of sorcerie, or cold drinkes. For lo, what sayth Seint Poule? the flesh coveiteth ayenst the spirit, and the spirit ayenst the flesh: they ben so contrarie and so striven, that a man may not alway do as he wold. The same Seint Poule, after his gret penance, in water and in lond; in water by night and by day, in gret peril, and in gret peine; in lond, in grete famine and thurst, cold and clothles, and ones stoned almost to deth; yet sayd he, alas! I caitif man, who shal deliver me fro the prison of my caitif body? And Seint Jerom, whan he long time had dwelled in desert, wheras he had no compagnie but of wilde bestes; wher as he had no mete but herbes, and water to his drinke, ne no bed but the naked erth, wherfore his flesh was black, as an Ethiopian, for hete, and nie destroyed for cold: yet sayd he, that the brenning of lecherie boiled in all his body. Wherfore I wot wel sikerly that they be deceived that say, they be not tempted in hir bodies. Witnesse Seint James that said, that every wight is tempted in his owen conscience; that is to say, that eche of us hath mater and occasion to be tempted of the norishing of sinne, that is in his body. And

therfore sayth Seint John the Evangelist: if we say that we ben without sinne, we deceive ourself, and truth is not in us.

Now shul ye understonde, in what maner sinne wexeth and encreseth in man. The first thing is that nourishing of sinne, of which I spake before, that is concupiscence: and after that cometh suggestion of the divel, this is to say, the divels belous, with which he bloweth in man the fire of concupiscence: and after that a man bethinketh him, whether he wol do or no that thing to which he is tempted. And than if a man withstond and weive the first entising of his flesh, and of the fend, than it is no sinne: and if so be he do not, than feleth he anon a flame of delit, and than it is good to beware and kepe him wel, or elles he wol fall anon to consenting of sinne, and than wol he do it, if he may have time and place. And of this mater sayth Moyses by the devil, in this maner: the fend sayth, I wol chace and pursue man by wicked suggestion, and I wol hent him by meving and stirring of sinne, and I wol depart my pris, or my prey, by deliberation, and my lust shal be accomplised in delit; I wol draw my swerd in consenting: (for certes, right as a swerd departeth a thing in two peces, right so consenting departeth God fro man) and than wol I sle him with my hond in dede of sinne. Thus sayth the fend; for certes, than is a man al ded in soule; and thus is sinne accomplised, by temptation, by delit, and by consenting: and than is the sinne actuel.

Forsoth sinne is in two maners, either it is venial, or dedly sinne. Sothly, whan a man loveth any creature more than Jesu Crist our creatour, than it is dedly sinne: and venial sinne it is, if a man love Jesu Crist lesse than him ought. Forsoth the dede of this venial sinne is ful perilous, for it amenuseth the love that man shuld have to God, more and more. And therfore if a man charge himself with many swiche venial sinnes, certes, but if so be that he somtime discharge him of hem by shrift, they may wel lightly amenuse in him all the love that he hath to Jesu Crist: and in this wise skippeth venial sinne into dedly sinne. For certes, the more that a man chargeth his soule with venial sinnes, the more he is enclined to fall into dedly sinne. And therfore let us not be negligent to discharge us of venial sinnes. For the proverbe sayth, that many smal maken a gret. And herken this ensample: A gret wawe of the see cometh somtime with so gret a violence, that it drencheth the ship: and the same harme do somtime the smal dropes of water, that enteren thurgh a litel crevis in the thurrok, and in the botom of the ship, if men ben so negligent, that they discharge hem not by time. And therfore although ther be difference betwix thise two causes of drenching, algates the ship is dreint. Right so fareth it somtime of dedly sinne, and of anoious venial sinnes, whan they multiplie in man so gretly, that thilke worldly thinges that he loveth, thurgh which he sinneth venially, is as gret in his herte as the love of God, or more: and therfore the love of every thing that is not beset in God, ne don principally for Goddes sake, although that a man love it lesse than God, yet is it venial sinne; and dedly sinne is, whan the love of any thing weigheth in the herte of man, as moche as the love of God, or more. Dedly sinne, as sayth Seint Augustine, is, whan a man tourneth his herte fro God, whiche that is veray soveraine bountee, that may not chaunge, and yeveth his herte to thing that may chaunge and flitte: and certes, that is every thing save God of heven. For soth is, that if a man yeve his love, which that he oweth to God with all his herte, unto a creature, certes, as moche of his love as he yeveth to the same creature, so moche he bereveth fro God, and therfore doth he sinne: for he, that is dettour to God, ne yeldeth not to God all his dette, that is to sayn, all the love of his herte.

Now sith man understondeth generally, which is venial sinne, than is it covenable to tell specially of sinnes, whiche that many a man peraventure demeth hem no sinnes, and shriveth him not of the same, and yet natheles they be sinnes sothly, as thise clerkes writen; this is to say, at every tyme that man eteth and drinketh more than sufficeth to the sustenance of his body, in certain he doth sinne; eke whan he speketh more than it nedeth, he doth sinne; eke whan he herkeneth not benignely the complaint of the poure; eke whan he is in hele of body, and wol not fast whan other folk fast, without cause resonable; eke whan he slepeth more than nedeth, or whan he cometh by that encheson to late to chirche, or to other werkes of charitee; eke whan he useth his wif withouten soveraine desire of engendrure, to the honour of God, or for the entent to yeld his wif his dette of his body; eke whan he wol not visite the sike, or the prisoner, if he may; eke if he love wif or child, or other worldly thing, more than reson requireth; eke if he flater or blandise more than him ought for any necessitee; eke if he amenuse or withdrawe the almesse of the poure; eke if he apparaile his mete more deliciously than nede is, or ete it to hastily by likerousnesse; eke if he talke vanitees in the chirche, or at Goddes service, or that he be a taler of idle wordes of foly or vilanie, for he shal yeld accomptes of it at the day of dome; eke whan he behighteth or assureth to don thinges that he may not perfourme; eke whan that he by lightnesse of foly missayeth or scorneth his neighbour; eke whan he hath ony wicked suspecion of thing, ther he ne wote of it no sothfastnesse: thise thinges and mo withouten nombre be sinnes, as sayth Seint Augustine. Now shul ye understonde, that al be it so that non erthly man may eschewe al venial sinnes, yet may he refreine him, by the brenning love that he hath to our Lord Jesu Crist, and by prayer and confession, and other good werkes, so that it shal but litel grieve. For as sayth Seint Augustine; if a man love God in swiche maner, that all that ever he doth is in the love of God, or for the love of God verally, for he brenneth in the love of God, loke how moche that o drope of water, which falleth into a fourneis ful of fire, anoieth or greveth the brenning of the fire, in like maner anoieth or greveth a venial sinne unto that man, whiche is stedfast and parfite in the love of our Saviour Jesu Crist. Furthermore, men may also refreine and put away venial sinne, by receiving worthily the precious body of Jesu Crist; by receiving eke of holy water; by almes dede; by general confession of *Confiteor* at Masse, and at prime, and at complin, and by blessing of Bishoppes and Preestes, and by other good werkes.

De septem peccatis mortalibus.

Now it is behovely to tellen whiche ben dedly sinnes, that is to say, chiefetaines of sinnes; for as moche as all they ren in o lees, but in divers maners. Now ben they cleped chiefetaines, for as moche as they be chiefe, and of hem springen all other sinnes. The rote of thise sinnes than is pride, the general rote of all harmes. For of this rote springen certain braunches: as ire, envie, accidie or slouthe, avarice or coveitise, (to commun understonding) glotonie, and lecherie: and eche of thise chief sinnes hath his braunches and his twigges, as shal be declared in hir chapitres folowing.

De superbia.

And though so be, that no man knoweth utterly the nombre of the twigges, and of the harmes that comen of pride, yet wol I shew a partie of hem, as ye shul understond. Ther is inobedience, avaunting, ipocrisie, despit, arrogance, impudence, swelling of herte, insolence, elation, impatience, strif, contumacie, presumption, irreverence, pertinacie, vaine glorie, and many other twigges that I cannot declare. Inobedient is he that disobeyeth for despit to the commandements of God, and to his soveraines, and to his gostly fader. Avauntour, is he that bosteth of the harme or of the bountee that he hath don. Ipocrite, is he that hideth to shew him swiche as he is, and sheweth him to seme swiche as he is not. Despitous, is he that hath disdain of his neighebour, that is to sayn. of his even Cristen, or hath despit to do that him ought to do. Arrogant, is he that thinketh that he hath those bountees in him, that he hath not, or weneth that he shulde have hem by his deserving, or elles that demeth that he be that he is not. Impudent, is he that for his pride hath no shame of his sinnes. Swelling of herte, is whan man rejoyceth him of harme that he hath don. Insolent, is he that despiseth in his jugement all other folk, as in regarde of his value, of his conning, of his speking, and of his bering. Elation, is whan he ne may neither suffre to have maister ne felawe. Impatient, is he that wol not be taught, ne undernome of his vice, and by strif werrieth truth wetingly, and defendeth his foly. *Contumax*, is he that thurgh his indignation is ayenst every auctoritee or power of hem that ben his soveraines. Presumption, is whan a man undertaketh an emprise that him ought not to do, or elles that he may not do, and this is called surquidrie. Irreverence, is whan man doth not honour ther as him ought to do, and waiteth to be reverenced. Pertinacie, is whan man defendeth his foly, and trusteth to moche in his owen wit. Vaine-glorie, is for to have pompe, and delit in his temporel highnesse, and glorye him in his worldly estate. Jangling, is whan man speketh to moche before folk, and clappeth as a mille, and taketh no kepe what he sayth.

And yet ther is a privee spice of pride, that waiteth first to be salewed, or he wol salew, all be he lesse worthy than that other is; and eke he waiteth to sit, or to go above him in the way, or kisse the pax, or ben encensed, or gon to offring before his neighbour, and swiche semblable thinges, ayenst his duetee peraventure, but that he hath his herte and his entente, in swiche a proude desire, to be magnified and honoured beforn the peple.

Now ben ther two maner of prides; that on of hem is within the herte of a man, and that other is without. Of swiche sothly thise foresayd thinges, and mo than I have sayd, apperteinen to pride, that is within the herte of man; and ther be other spices of pride that ben withouten: but natheles, that on of thise spices of pride is signe of that other, right as the gay levesell at the Taverne is signe of the win that is in the celler. And this is in many thinges: as in speche and contenance, and outragious array of clothing: for certes, if ther had ben no sinne in clothing, Crist wold not so sone have noted and spoken of the clothing of thilke rich man in the gospel. And, as Seint Gregory sayth, that precious clothing is culpable for the derthe of it, and for his softnesse, and for his strangenesse and disguising, and for the superfluitee, or for the inordinate scantnesse of it, alas! may not a man see as in our daies, the sinneful costlewe array of clothing, and namely in to moche superfluitee, or elles in to disordinate scantnesse?

As to the firste sinne in superfluitee of clothing, whiche that maketh it so dere, to the harme of the peple, not only the coste of the enbrouding, the disguising, endenting, or barring, ounding, paling, winding, or bending, and semblable wast of cloth in vanitee; but ther is also the costlewe furring in hir gounes, so moche pounsoning of chesel to maken holes, so moche dagging of sheres, with the superfluitee in length of the foresaide gounes, trailing in the dong and in the myre, on hors and eke on foot, as wel of man as of woman, that all thilke trailing is veraily (as in effect) wasted, consumed, thredbare, and rotten with dong, rather than it is yeven to the poure, to gret damage of the foresayd poure folk, and that in sondry wise: this is to sayn, the more that cloth is wasted, the more must it cost to the poure peple for the scarcenesse; and furtherover, if so be that they wolden yeve swiche pounsoned and dagged clothing to the poure peple, it is not convenient to were for hir estate, ne suffieant to bote hir necessitee, to kepe hem fro the distemperance of the firmament. Upon that other side, to speke of the horrible disordinat scantnesse of clothing, as ben thise cutted sloppes or hanselines, that thurgh hir shortenesse cover not the shameful membres of man, to wicked entente; alas! som of hem shewen the bosse and the shape of the horrible swollen membres, that semen like to the maladie of Hernia, in the wrapping of hir hosen, and eke the buttokkes of hem behinde, that faren as it were the hinder part of a she ape in the ful of the mone. And moreover the wretched swollen membres that they shew thurgh disguising, in departing of hir hosen in white and rede, semeth that half hir shameful privee membres were flaine. And if so be that they departe hir hosen in other colours, as is white and blewe, or white and blake, or blake and rede, and so forth; than semeth it, as by variance of colour, that the half part of hir privee membres ben corrupt by the fire of Seint Anthonie, or by cancre, or other swiche mischance. Of the hinder part of hir buttokkes it is ful horrible for to see, for certes in that partie of hir body ther as they

purgen hir stinking ordure, that foule partie shewe they to the peple proudely in despite of honestee, whiche honestee that Jesu Crist and his frendes observed to shewe in hir lif. Now as to the outrageous array of women, God wote, that though the visages of som of hem semen ful chaste and debonaire, yet notifien they, in hir array of attire, likerousnesse and pride. I say not that honestee in clothing of man or woman is uncovenable, but certes the superfluitee or disordinat scarcitee of clothing is reprevable. Also the sinne of ornament, or of apparaile, is in thinges that apperteine to riding, as in to many delicat hors, that ben holden for delit, that ben so faire, fatte, and costlewe; and also in many a vicious knave, that is susteined because of hem; in curious harneis, as in sadles, cropers, peitrels, and bridles, covered with precious cloth and rich, barred and plated of gold and silver. For which God sayth by Zacharie the Prophet, I wol confounde the riders of swiche hors. These folke taken litel regard of the riding of Goddes sone of heven, and of his harneis, whan he rode upon the asse, and had non other harneis but the poure clothes of his disciples, ne we rede not that ever he rode on ony other beste. I speke this for the sinne of superfluitee, and not for honestee, whan reson it requireth. And moreover, certes pride is gretly notified in holding of gret meinie, whan they ben of litel profite or of right no profite, and namely whan that meinie is felonous and damageous to the peple by hardinesse of high lordeship, or by way of office; for certes, swiche lordes sell than hir lordeship to the Devil of helle, whan they susteine the wickednesse of hir meinie. Or elles, whan thise folk of low degree, as they that holden hostelries, susteinen thefte of hir hostellers, and that is in many maner of deceites: thilke maner of folk ben the flies that folowen the hony, or elles the houndes that folowen the caraine. Swiche foresayde folk stranglen spirituelly hir lordeshipes; for which thus saith David the Prophet; wicked deth mot come unto thilke lordeshipes, and God yeve that they mot descend into helle, all doun; for in hir houses is iniquitee and shrewednesse, and not God of heven. And certes, but if they don amendement, right as God yave his benison to Laban by the service of Jacob, and to Pharao by the service of Joseph, right so God wol yeve his malison to swiche lordeshipes as susteine the wickednesse of hir servants, but they come to amendement. Pride of the table appereth eke ful oft; for certes riche men be cleped to festes, and poure folk be put away and rebuked; and also in excesse of divers metes and drinkes, and namely swiche maner bake metes and dishe metes brenning of wilde fire, and peinted and castelled with paper, and semblable wast, so that it is abusion to thinke. And eke in to gret preciousnesse of vessell, and curiositee of minstralcie, by which a man is stirred more to the delites of luxurie, if so be that he sette his herte the lesse upon oure Lord Jesu Crist, it is a sinne; and certainely the delites might ben so gret in this cas, that a man might lightly fall by hem into dedly sinne. The spices that sourden of pride, sothly whan they sourden of malice imagined, avised, and forecaste, or elles of usage, ben dedly sinnes, it is no doute. And whan they sourden by freeltee unavised sodenly, and sodenly withdraw again, al be they grevous sinnes, I gesse that they be not dedly. Now might men aske, wherof that pride sourdeth and springeth. I say that somtime it springeth of the goodes of nature, somtime of the goodes of fortune, and somtime of the goodes of grace. Certes the goodes of nature stonden only in the goodes of the body, or of the soule. Certes, the goodes of the body ben hele of body, strength, delivernesse, beautee, gentrie, franchise; the goodes of nature of the soule ben good wit, sharpe understonding, subtil engine, vertue naturel, good memorie: goodes of fortune ben riches, high degrees of lordshipes, and preisinges of the peple: goodes of grace ben science, power to suffre spirituel travaile, benignitee, vertuous contemplation, withstonding of temptation, and semblable thinges: of which foresayd goodes, certes it is a gret folie, a man to priden him in ony of hem all. Now as for to speke of goodes of nature, God wote that somtime we have hem in nature as moche to our damage as to our profite. As for to speke of hele of body, trewely it passeth ful lightly, and also it is ful ofte encheson of sikenesse of the soule: for God wote, the flesh is a gret enemy to the soule: and therfore the more that the body is hole, the more be we in peril to falle. Eke for to priden him in his strength of body, it is a grete folie: for certes the flesh coveiteth ayenst the spirite: and ever the more strong that the flesh is, the sorier may the soule be: and over all, this strength of body, and worldly hardinesse, causeth ful oft to many man peril and mischance. Also to have pride of gentrie is right gret folie: for oft time the gentrie of the body benimeth the gentrie of the soule: and also we ben all of o fader and of o moder: and all we ben of o nature rotten and corrupt, both riche and poure. Forsoth o maner gentrie is for to preise, that appareilleth mannes corage with vertues and moralitees, and maketh him Cristes child; for trusteth wel, that over what man that sinne hath maistrie, he is a veray cherl to sinne.

Now ben ther general signes of gentilnesse; as eschewing of vice and ribaudrie, and servage of sinne, in word, and in werk and contenance, and using vertue, as courtesie, and clenenesse, and to be liberal; that is to say, large by mesure; for thilke that passeth mesure, is folie and sinne. Another is to remember him of bountee, that he of other folk hath received. Another is to be benigne to his subgettes; wherfore saith Seneke; ther is nothing more covenable to a man of high estate, than debonairtee and pitee: and therfore thise flies that men clepen bees, whan they make hir king, they chesen on that hath no pricke, wherwith he may sting. Another is, man to have a noble herte and a diligent, to atteine to high vertuous thinges. Now certes, a man to priden him in the goodes of grace, is eke an outrageous folie: for thilke yeftes of grace that shuld have tourned him to goodnesse, and to medicine, tourneth him to venime and confusion, as sayth Seint Gregorie. Certes also, who so prideth him in the goodnesse of fortune, he is a gret fool: for somtime is a man a gret lord by the morwe, that is a caitife and a wretch or it be night: and somtime the richesse of a man is cause of his deth: and somtime the delites of a man ben cause of grevous maladie, thurgh which he dieth. Certes, the commendation of the peple is ful false and brotel for to trust; this

day they preise, to-morwe they blame. God wote, desire to have commendation of the peple hath caused deth to many a besy man.

Remedium Superbiæ.

Now sith that so is, that ye have understond what is pride, and which be the spices of it, and how mennes pride sourdeth and springeth; now ye shul understond which is the remedie ayenst it. Humilitee or mekenesse is the remedy ayenst pride; that is a vertue, thurgh which a man hath veray knowlege of himself, and holdeth of himself no deintee, ne no pris, as in regard of his desertes, considering ever his freeltee. Now ben ther three maner of humilitees; as humilitee in herte, and another in the mouth, and the thridde in werkes. The humilitee in herte is in foure maners: that on is, whan a man holdeth himself as nought worth before God of heven: the second is, whan he despiseth non other man: the thridde is, whan he ne recketh nat though men holde him nought worth: and the fourth is, whan he is not sory of his humiliation. Also the humilitee of mouth is in foure thinges; in attemperat speche; in humilitee of speche; and whan he confesseth with his owen mouth, that he is swiche as he thinketh that he is in his herte: another is, whan he preiseth the bountee of another man and nothing therof amenuseth. Humilitee eke in werkes is in foure maners. The first is, whan he putteth other men before him; the second is, to chese the lowest place of all; the thridde is, gladly to assent to good conseil; the fourth is, to stond gladly to the award of his soveraine, or of him that is higher in degree: certain this is a gret werk of humilitee.

De Invidia.

After pride wol I speke of the foule sinne of Envie, which that is, after the word of the philosopher, sorwe of other mennes prosperitee; and after the word of Seint Augustine, it is sorwe of other mennes wele, and joye of other mennes harme. This foule sinne is platly ayenst the holy gost. Al be it so, that every sinne is ayenst the holy gost, yet natheles, for as moche as bountee apperteineth proprely to the holy gost, and envie cometh proprely of malice, therfore it is proprely ayenst the bountee of the holy Gost. Now hath malice two spices, that is to say, hardinesse of herte in wickednesse, or elles the flesh of man is so blind, that he considereth not that he is in sinne, or recketh not that he is in sinne; which is the hardinesse of the divel. That other spice of envie is, whan that a man werrieth trouth, whan he wot that it is trouth, and also whan he werrieth the grace of God that God hath yeve to his neighbour: and all this is by envie. Certes than is envie the werst sinne that is; for sothly all other sinnes be somtime only ayenst on special vertue: but certes envie is ayenst al maner vertues and alle goodnesse; for it is sory of all bountee of his neighbour: and in this maner it is divers from all other sinnes; for wel unnethe is ther any sinne that it ne hath som delit in himself, save only envie, that ever hath in himself anguish and sorwe. The spices of envie ben these. Ther is first sorwe of other mennes goodnesse and of hir prosperitee; and prosperitee ought to be kindly mater of joye; than is envie a sinne ayenst kinde. The seconde spice of envie is joye of other mennes harme; and that is proprely like to the divel, that ever rejoyseth him of mannes harme. Of thise two spices cometh backbiting; and this sinne of backbiting or detracting hath certain spices, as thus: som man preiseth his neighbour by a wicked entente, for he maketh alway a wicked knotte at the laste ende: alway he maketh a *but* at the last ende, that is digne of more blame, than is worth all the preising. The second spice is, that if a man be good, or doth or sayth a thing to good entente, the backbiter wol turne all that goodnesse up so doun to his shrewde entente. The thridde is to amenuse the bountee of his neighbour. The fourthe spice of backbiting is this, that if men speke goodnesse of a man, than wol the backbiter say; Parfay swiche a man is yet better than he; in dispreising of him that men preise. The fifth spice is this, for to consent gladly to herken the harme that men speke of other folk. This sinne is ful gret, and ay encreseth after the wicked entent of the backbiter. After backbiting cometh grutching or murmurance, and somtime it springeth of impatience ayenst God, and somtime ayenst man. Ayenst God it is whan a man grutcheth ayenst the peine of helle, or ayenst poverte, or losse of catel, or ayenst rain or tempest, or elles grutcheth that shrewes have prosperitee, or elles that good men have adversitee: and all thise thinges shuld men suffre patiently, for they comen by the rightful jugement and ordinance of God. Somtime cometh grutching of avarice, as Judas grutched ayenst the Magdeleine, whan she anointed the hed of our Lord Jesu Crist with hire precious oynement. This maner murmuring is swiche as whan man grutcheth of goodnesse that himself doth, or that other folk don of hir owen catel. Somtime cometh murmur of pride, as whan Simon the Pharisee grutched ayenst the Magdeleine, whan she approched to Jesu Crist and wept at his feet for hire sinnes: and somtime it sourdeth of envie, whan men discover a mannes harme that was privee, or bereth him on hond thing that is false. Murmur also is oft among servants, that grutchen whan hir soveraines bidden hem do leful thinges; and for as moche as they dare not openly withsay the commaundement of hir soveraines, yet wol they say harme and grutche and murmure prively for veray despit; which wordes they call the divels *Pater noster*, though so be that the divel had never *Pater noster*, but that lewed folke yeven it swiche a name. Somtime it cometh of ire or privee hate, that norisheth rancour in the herte, as afterward I shal declare. Than cometh eke bitternesse of herte, thurgh which bitternesse every good dede of his neighbour semeth to him bitter and unsavory. Than cometh discord that unbindeth all maner of frendship. Than cometh scorning of his neighbour, al do he never so wel. Than cometh accusing, as whan a man seketh occasion to annoyen his neighbour, which is like the craft of the divel, that waiteth both day and night to accusen us all. Than cometh malignitee, thurgh which a man annoieth his neighbour prively if he may, and if he may not, algate his wicked will shal not let, as for to brenne his hous prively, or enpoison him, or sle his bestes, and semblable thinges.

Remedium Invidiæ.

Now wol I speke of the remedie ayenst this foule sinne of envie. Firste is the love of God

principally, and loving of his neighbour as himself: for sothly that on ne may not be without that other. And trust wel, that in the name of thy neighbour thou shalt understande the name of thy brother; for certes all we have on fader fleshly, and on moder; that is to say, Adam and Eve; and also on fader spirituel, that is to say, God of heven. Thy neighbour art thou bounde for to love, and will him all goodnesse, and therfore sayth God; Love thy neighbour as thyself; that is to say, to salvation both of lif and soule. And moreover thou shalt love him in word, and in benigne amonesting and chastising, and comfort him in his anoyes, and praye for him with all thy herte. And in dede thou shalt love him in swiche wise that thou shalt do to him in charitee, as thou woldest that it were don to thin owen person: and therfore thou ne shalt do him no damage in wicked word, ne harme in his body, ne in his catel, ne in his soule by entising of wicked ensample. Thou shalt not desire his wif, ne non of his thinges. Understonde eke that in the name of neighbour is comprehended his enemy: certes man shal love his enemy for the commandment of God, and sothly thy frend thou shalt love in God. I say thin enemy shalt thou love for Goddes sake, by his commandement: for if it were reson that man shulde hate his enemy, forsoth God n'olde not receive us to his love that ben his enemies. Ayenst three maner of wronges, that his enemy doth to him, he shal do three things, as thus: ayenst hate and rancour of herte, he shal love him in herte: ayenst chiding and wicked wordes, he shal pray for his enemy: ayenst the wicked dede of his enemy he shal do him bountee. For Crist sayth: Love your enemies, and prayeth for hem that speke you harme, and for hem that chasen and pursuen you: and do bountee to hem that haten you. Lo, thus comandeth us our Lord Jesu Crist to do to our enemies: forsoth nature driveth us to love our frendes, and parfay our enemies have more nede of love than our frendes, and they that more nede have, certes to hem shal men do goodnesse. And certes in thilke dede have we remembrance of the love of Jesu Crist that died for his enemies: and in as moche as thilke love is more grevous to performe, so moche is more gret the merite, and therfore the loving of our enemy hath confounded the venime of the divel. For right as the divel is confounded by humilitee, right so is he wounded to the deth by the love of our enemy: certes than is love the medicine that casteth out the venime of envie fro mannes herte.

De Ira.

After envy wol I declare of the sinne of Ire: for sothly who so hath envy upon his neighbour, anon communly wol finde him mater of wrath in word or in dede ayenst him to whom he hath envie. And as wel cometh Ire of pride as of envie, for sothly he that is proude or envious is lightly wroth.

This sinne of Ire, after the discriving of Seint Augustin, is wicked will to be avenged by word or by dede. Ire, after the Philosophre, is the fervent blode of man yquicked in his herte, thurgh which he wold harme to him that he hateth: for certes the herte of man by enchaufing and meving of his blood waxeth so troubled, that it is out of all maner jugement of reson. But ye shul understonde that Ire is in two maners, that on of hem is good, and that other is wicked. The good ire is by jalousie of goodnesse, thurgh the which man is wroth with wickednesse, and again wickednesse. And therfore saith the wise man, that ire is better than play. This ire is with debonairtee, and it is wrothe without bitternesse: not wrothe ayenst the man, but wrothe with the misdede of the man: as saith the Prophet David; *Irascimini, & nolite peccare.* Now understond that wicked ire is in two maners, that is to say, soden ire or hasty ire without avisement and consenting of reson; the mening and the sense of this is, that the reson of a man ne consenteth not to that soden ire, and than it is venial. Another ire is that is ful wicked, that cometh of felonie of herte, avised and cast before, with wicked will to do vengeance, and therto his reson consenteth: and sothly this is dedly sinne. This ire is so displesant to God, that it troubleth his hous, and chaseth the holy Gost out of mannes soule, and wasteth and destroyeth that likenesse of God, that is to say. the vertue that is in mannes soule, and putteth in him the likenesse of the devil, and benimeth the man fro God that is his rightful Lord. This ire is a ful gret plesance to the devil, for it is the devils forneis that he enchaufeth with the fire of helle. For certes right so as fire is more mighty to destroie erthly thinges, than any other element, right so ire is mighty to destroie all spirituel thinges. Loke how that fire of smal gledes, that ben almost ded under ashen, wol quicken ayen whan they ben touched with brimstone, right so ire wol evermore quicken ayen, whan it is touched with pride that is covered in mannes herte. For certes fire ne may not come out of no thing, but if it were first in the same thing naturelly: as fire is drawne out of flintes with stele. And right so as pride is many times mater of ire, right so is rancour norice and keper of ire. Ther is a maner tree, as sayth Seint Isidore, that whan men make a fire of the saide tree, and cover the coles of it with ashen, sothly the fire therof wol last all a yere or more: and right so fareth it of rancour, whan it is ones conceived in the herte of som men, certes it wol lasten peraventure from on Easterne day until another Easterne day, or more. But certes the same man is ful fer from the mercie of God all thilke while.

In this foresaid devils forneis ther forgen three shrewes; pride, that ay bloweth and encreseth the fire by chiding and wicked wordes: than stondeth envie, and holdeth the hot yren upon the herte of man, with a pair of longe tonges of longe rancour: and than stondeth the sinne of contumelie or strif and cheste, and battereth and forgeth by vilains reprevinges. Certes this cursed sinne annoyeth both to the man himself, and eke his neighbour. For sothly almost all the harme or damage that ony man doth to his neighbour cometh of wrath: for certes, outrageous wrathe doth all that ever the foule fende willeth or commandeth him; for he ne spareth neyther for our Lord Jesu Crist, ne his swete moder; and in his outrageous anger and ire, alas! alas! ful many on at that time, feleth in his herte ful wickedly, both of Crist, and also of all his halwes. Is not this a cursed vice? Yes certes. Alas! it benimmeth fro man his witte and his reson, and all his debonaire lif

spirituel, that shuld kepe his soule. Certes it benimmeth also Goddes due lordship (and that is mannes soule) and the love of his neighbours: it striveth also all day ayenst trouth; it reveth him the quiet of his herte, and subverteth his soule.

Of ire comen thise stinking engendrures; first, hate, that is olde wrath: discord, thurgh which a man forsaketh his olde frend that he hath loved ful long: and than cometh werre, and every maner of wrong that a man doth to his neighbour in body or in catel. Of this cursed sinne of ire cometh eke manslaughter. And understondeth wel that homicide (that is, manslaughter) is in divers wise. Som maner of homicide is spirituel, and som is bodily. Spirituel manslaughter is in six thinges. First, by hate, as sayth St. John: He that hateth his brother, is an homicide. Homicide is also by backbiting; of which backbitours sayth Salomon, that they have two swerdes, with which they slay hir neighbours: for sothly as wicked it is to benime of him his good name as his lif. Homicide is also in yeving of wicked conseil by fraude, as for to yeve conseil to areise wrongful customes and talages; of which sayth Salomon: A lion roring, and a bere hungrie, ben like to cruel Lordes, in withholding or abregging of the hire or of the wages of servantes, or elles in usurie, or in withdrawing of the almesse of poure folk. For which the wise man sayth: Fedeth him that almost dieth for honger; for sothly but if thou fede him thou sleest him. And all thise ben dedly sinnes. Bodily manslaughter is whan thou sleest him with thy tonge in other maner, as whan thou commandest to sle a man, or elles yevest conseil to sle a man. Manslaughter in dede is in foure maners. That on is by lawe, right as a justice dampneth him that is culpable to the deth: but let the justice beware that he do it rightfully, and that he do it not for delit to spill blood, but for keping of rightwisenesse. Another homicide is don for necessitee, as whan a man sleeth another in his defence, and that he ne may non other wise escapen fro his owen deth: but certain, and he may escape withouten slaughter of his adversarie, he doth sinne, and he shal bere penance as for dedly sinne. Also if a man by cas or aventure shete an arowe or cast a stone, with which he sleeth a man, he is an homicide. And if a woman by negligence overlyeth hire child in hire slepe, it is homicide and dedly sinne. Also whan a man disturbleth conception of a childe, and maketh a woman barein by drinkes of venimous herbes, thurgh which she may not conceive, or sleeth hire child by drinkes, or elles putteth certain material thing in hire secret place to sle hire child, or elles doth unkinde sinne, by which man, or woman, shedeth his nature in place ther as a childe may not be conceived: or elles if a woman hath conceived, and hurteth hireself, and by that mishappe the childe is slaine, yet is it homicide. What say we eke of women that murderen hir children for drede of worldly shame? Certes, it is an horrible homicide. Eke if a man approche to a woman by desir of lecherie, thurgh which the childe is perished; or elles smiteth a woman wetingly, thurgh which she leseth hire child; all thise ben homicides, and horrible dedly sinnes. Yet comen ther of ire many mo sinnes, as wel in worde, as in thought and in dede; as he that arretteth upon God, or blameth God of the thing of which he is himself gilty; or despiseth God and all his halwes, as don thise cursed hasardours in divers contrees. This cursed sinne don they, whan they felen in hir herte ful wickedly of God and of his halwes: also whan they treten unreverently the sacrament of the auter, thilke sinne is so gret, that unneth it may be relesed, but that the mercy of God passeth all his werkes, it is so gret, and he so benigne. Than cometh also of ire attry anger, whan a man is sharpely amonested in his shrift to leve his sinne, than wol he be angry, and answere hokerly and angerly, to defend or excusen his sinne by unstedfastnesse of his fleshe; or elles he did it for to hold compagnie with his felawes; or elles he sayeth the fend enticed him; or elles he did it for his youthe; or elles his complexion is so corageous that he may not forbere; or elles it is his destinee, he sayth, unto a certain age; or elles he sayth it cometh him of gentilnesse of his aunceatres, and semblable thinges. All thise maner of folke so wrappen hem in hir sinnes, that they ne wol not deliver hemself; for sothly, no wight that excuseth himself wilfully of his sinne, may not be delivered of his sinne, til that he mekely beknoweth his sinne. After this than cometh swering, that is expresse ayenst the commandement of God: and that befalleth often of anger and of ire. God sayth; Thou shalt not take the name of thy Lord God in idel. Also our Lord Jesu Crist sayth by the word of Seint Mathew; Ne shal ye not swere in all manere, neyther by heven, for it is Goddes trone: ne by erthe, for it is the benche of his feet: ne by Jerusalem, for it is the citee of a gret King: ne by thin hed, for thou ne mayst not make an here white ne black: but he sayth, be your word, ye, ye, nay, nay; and what that is more, it is of evil. Thus sayth Crist. For Cristes sake swere not so sinnefully, in dismembring of Crist, by soule, herte, bones, and body: for certes it semeth, that ye thinken that the cursed Jewes dismembred him not ynough, but ye dismembre him more. And if so be that the lawe compell you to swere, than reuleth you after the lawe of God in your swering, as sayth Jeremie; Thou shalt kepe three conditions; thou shalt swere in trouth, in dome, and in rightwisenesse. This is to say, thou shalt swere soth; for every lesing is ayenst Crist; for Crist is veray trouth: and thinke wel this, that every gret swerer, not compelled lawfully to swere, the plage shal not depart fro his hous, while he useth unleful swering. Thou shalt swere also in dome, whan thou art constreined by the domesman to witnesse a trouth. Also thou shalt not swere for envie, neyther for favour, ne for mede, but only for rightwisenesse, and for declaring of trouthe to the honour and worship of God, and to the aiding and helping of thin even Cristen. And therfore every man that taketh Goddes name in idel, or falsely swereth with his mouth, or elles taketh on him the name of Crist, to be called a Cristen man, and liveth agenst Cristes living and his teching: all they take Goddes name in idel. Loke also what sayth Seint Peter; *Actuum* iv. *Non est aliud nomen sub cœlo*, &c. Ther is non other name (sayth Seint Peter) under heven yeven to men, in which they may be saved; that is to say, but the name of Jesu Crist. Take kepe eke how precious is the name of Jesu Crist, as sayth Seint Poule, *ad Philipenses* ii. *In nomine Jesu*, &c. that in the name of Jesu every knee of hevenly creature, or

erthly, or of heile, shuld bowen; for it is so high and so worshipful, that the cursed fend in helle shuld tremble for to here it named. Than semeth it, that men that swere so horribly by his blessed name, that they despise it more boldely than did the cursed Jewes, or elles the divel, that trembleth whan he hereth his name.

Now certes, sith that swering (but if it be lawfully don) is so highly defended, moche worse is for to swere falsely, and eke nedeles.

What say we eke of hem that deliten hem in swering, and hold it a genterie or manly dede to swere gret othes? And what of hem that of veray usage ne cese not to swere gret othes, al be the cause not worth a strawe? Certes this is horrible sinne. Swering sodenly without avisement is also a gret sinne. But let us go now to that horrible swering of adjuration and conjuration, as don thise false enchauntours and nigromancers in basins ful of water, or in a bright sword, in a cercle, or in a fire, or in a sholder bone of a shepe: I cannot sayn, but that they do cursedly and damnably ayenst Crist, and all the feith of holy chirche.

What say we of hem that beleven on divinales, as by flight or by noise of briddes or of bestes, or by sorte of geomancie, by dremes, by chirking of dores, or craking of houses, by gnawing of rattes, and swiche maner wretchednesse? Certes, all thise thinges ben defended by God and holy chirche, for which they ben accursed, till they come to amendement, that on swiche filth set hir beleve. Charmes for woundes, or for maladies of men or of bestes, if they take any effect, it may be peraventure that God suffreth it, for folk shuld yeve the more feith and reverence to his name.

Now wol I speke of lesinges, which generally is false signifiance of word, in entent to deceive his even Cristen. Some lesing is, of which ther cometh non avantage to no wight; and som lesing turneth to the profite and ese of a man, and to the dammage of another man. Another lesing is, for to saven his lif or his catel. Another lesing cometh of delit for to lie, in which delit, they wol forge a long tale, and peint it with all circumstances, wher all the ground of the tale is false. Some lesing cometh, for he wol sustein his word: and som lesing cometh of recchelesnesse withouten avisement, and semblable thinges.

Let us now touche the vice of flaterie, which ne cometh not gladly, but for drede, or for covetise. Flaterie is generally wrongful preising. Flaterers ben the devils nourices, that nourish his children with milke of losengerie. Forsoth Salomon sayth, That flaterie is werse than detraction: for somtime detraction maketh an hautein man be the more humble, for he dredeth detraction, but certes flaterie maketh a man to enhaunce his herte and his contenance. Flaterers ben the devils enchauntours, for they maken a man to wenen himself be like that he is not like. They be like to Judas, that betrayed God; and thise flaterers betrayen man to selle him to his enemy, that is the devil. Flaterers ben the devils chappeleines, that ever singen *Placebo*. I reken flaterie in the vices of ire: for oft time if a man be wroth with another, than wol he flater som wight, to susteine him in his quarrel.

Speke we now of swiche cursing as cometh of irous herte. Malison generally may be said every maner power of harme: swiche cursing bereveth man the regne of God, as sayth Seint Poule. And oft time swiche cursing wrongfully retorneth again to him that curseth, as a bird retorneth again to his owen nest. And over all thing men ought eschew to curse hir children, and to yeve to the devil hir engendrure, as fer forth as in hem is: certes it is a grete peril and a grete sinne.

Let us than speke of chiding and repreving, which ben ful grete woundes in mannes herte, for they unsow the seames of frendship in mannes herte: for certes, unnethe may a man be plainely accorded with him, that he hath openly reviled, repreved, and disclaundred: this is a ful grisly sinne, as Crist sayth in the Gospel. And take ye kepe now, that he that repreveth his neighbour, either he repreveth him by som harme of peine, that he hath upon his bodie, as, Mesel, croked harlot; or by som sinne that he doth. Now if he repreve him by harme of peine, than turneth the repreve to Jesu Crist: for peine is sent by the rightwise sonde of God, and by his suffrance, be it meselrie, or maime, or maladie: and if he repreve him uncharitably of sinne, as, thou holour, thou dronkelewe harlot, and so forth; than apperteineth that to the rejoicing of the devil, which ever hath joye that men don sinne. And certes, chiding may not come but out of a vilains herte, for after the haboundance of the herte speketh the mouth ful oft. And ye shul understond, that loke by any way, whan ony man chastiseth another, that he beware fro chiding or repreving: for trewely, but he beware, he may ful lightly quicken the fire of anger and of wrath, which he shuld quench: and peraventure sleth him, that he might chastise with benignitee. For, as sayth Salomon, the amiable tonge is the tree of lif; that is to say, of lif spirituel. And sothly, a dissolute tonge sleth the spirit of him that repreveth, and also of him which is repreved. Lo, what sayth Seint Augustine: Ther is nothing so like the devils child, as he which oft chideth. A servant of God behoveth not to chide. And though that chiding be a vilains thing betwix all maner folk, yet it is certes most uncovenable betwene a man and his wif, for ther is never rest. And therfore sayth Salomon; An hous that is uncovered in rayn and dropping, and a chiding wif, ben like. A man, which is in a dropping hous in many places, though he eschew the dropping in o place, it droppeth on him in another place: so fareth it by a chiding wif; if she chide him not in o place, she wol chide him in another: and therfore, better is a morsel of bred with joye, than an hous filled ful of delices with chiding, sayth Salomon. And Seint Poule sayth; O ye women, beth ye subgettes to your husbonds, as you behoveth in God; and ye men loveth your wives.

Afterward speke we of scorning, which is a wicked sinne, and namely, whan he scorneth a man for his good werkes: for certes, swiche scorners faren like the foule tode, that may not endure to smell the swete savour of the vine, whan it flourisheth. Thise scorners ben parting felawes with the devil, for they have joye whan the devil winneth, and sorwe if he leseth. They ben adversaries to Jesu Crist, for they hate that he loveth; that is to say, salvation of soule.

Speke we now of wicked conseil, for he that

wicked conseil yeveth is a traitour, for he deceiveth him that trusteth in him. But natheles, yet is wicked conseil first ayenst himself: for, as sayth the wise man, every false living hath this propertee in himself, that he that wol annoy another man, he annoyeth first himself. And men shul understond, that man shal not take his conseil of false folk, ne of angry folk, or grevous folk, ne of folk that loven specially hir owen profit, ne of to moche worldly folk, namely, in conseiling of mannes soule.

Now cometh the sinne of hem that maken discord among folk, which is a sinne that Crist hateth utterly; and no wonder is; for he died for to make concord. And more shame don they to Crist, than did they that him crucified: for God loveth better, that frendship be amonges folk, than he did his owen body, which that he yave for unitee. Therfore ben they likened to the devil, that ever is about to make discord.

Now cometh the sinne of Double tonge, swiche as speke faire before folk, and wickedly behind; or elles they make semblaunt as though they spake of good entention, or elles in game and play, and yet they speken of wicked entente.

Now cometh bewreying of conseil, thurgh which a man is defamed: certes unnethe may he restore the damage. Now cometh manace, that is an open folie: for he that oft manaceth, he threteth more than he may performe ful oft time. Now comen idel wordes, that be without profite of him that speketh the wordes, and eke of him that herkeneth the wordes: or elles idel wordes ben tho that ben nedeles, or without entente of naturel profit. And al be it that idel wordes be somtime venial sinne, yet shuld men doute hem, for we shul yeve rekening of hem before God. Now cometh jangling, that may not come withouten sinne: and as sayth Salomon, it is a signe of apert folie. And therfore a philosophre sayd, whan a man axed him how that he shuld plese the peple, he answered; Do many good werkes, and speke few jangelinges. After this cometh the sinne of japeres, that ben the devils apes, for they make folk to laugh at hir japerie, as folk don at the gaudes of an ape: swiche japes defendeth Seint Poule. Loke how that vertuous wordes and holy comforten hem that travaillen in the service of Crist, right so comforten the vilains words, and the knakkes of japeres, hem that travaillen in the service of the devil. Thise ben the sinnes of the tonge, that comen of ire, and other sinnes many mo.

Remedium Iræ.

The remedie ayenst Ire, is a vertue that cleped is mansuetude, that is Debonairtee: and eke another vertue, that men clepen patience or sufferaunce.

Debonairtee withdraweth and refreineth the stirrings and mevings of mannes corage in his herte, in swich maner, that they ne skip not out by anger ne ire. Sufferance suffereth swetely all the annoyance and the wrong that is don to man outward. Seint Jerome sayth this of debonairtee, That it doth no harme to no wight, ne sayth: ne for no harme that men do ne say, he ne chafeth not ayenst reson. This vertue somtime cometh of nature; for, as sayth the philosophre, a man is a quick thing, by nature debonaire, and tretable to goodnesse: but whan debonairtee is enformed of grace, than it is the more worth.

Patience is another remedy ayenst ire, and is a vertue that suffereth swetely every mannes goodnesse, and is not wroth for non harme that is don to him. The philosophre sayth, that patience is the vertue that suffreth debonairly al the outrage of adversitee, and every wicked word. This vertue maketh a man like to God, and maketh him Goddes owen childe: as sayth Crist. This vertue discomfiteth thin enemies. And therfore sayth the wise man; if thou wolt vanquish thin enemie, see thou be patient. And thou shalt understond, that a man suffereth foure maner of grevances in outward thinges, ayenst the which foure he must have foure maner of patiences.

The first grevance is of wicked wordes. Thilke grevance suffred Jesu Crist, without grutching, ful patiently, whan the Jewes despised him and repreved him ful oft. Suffer thou therfore patiently, for the wise man saith: if thou strive with a foole, though the foole be wroth, or though he laugh, algate thou shalt have no reste. That other grevance outward is to have domage of thy catel. Therayenst suffred Crist ful patiently, whan he was despoiled of al that he had in this lif, and that n'as but his clothes. The thridde grevance is a man to have harme in his body. That suffred Crist ful patiently in all his passion. The fourthe grevance is in outrageous labour in werkes: wherfore I say, that folk that make hir servants to travaile to grevously, or out of time, as in holy dayes, sothly they do gret sinne. Hereayenst suffred Crist ful patiently, and taught us patience, whan he bare upon his blessed sholders the crosse, upon which he shuld suffer despitous deth. Here may men lerne to be patient; for certes, not only cristen men be patient for love of Jesu Crist, and for guerdon of the blisful lif that is perdurable, but certes the old Payenes, that never were cristened, commendeden and useden the vertue of patience.

A philosophre upon a time, that wold have beten his disciple for his gret trespas, for which he was gretly meved, and brought a yerde to bete the childe, and whan this child sawe the yerde, he sayd to his maister: what thinke ye to do? I wol bete thee, sayd the maister, for thy correction. Forsoth, sayd the childe, ye ought first correct yourself, that have lost all your patience for the offence of a child. Forsooth, sayd the maister all weping, thou sayest soth: have thou the yerde, my dere sone, and correct me for min impatience. Of patience cometh obedience, thurgh which a man is obedient to Crist, and to all hem to which he ought to be obedient in Crist. And understand wel, that obedience is parfite, whan that a man doth gladly and hastily, with good herte entirely, all that he shuld do. Obedience generally, is to performe hastily the doctrine of God, and of his soveraines, to which him ought to be obeisant in all rightwisenesse.

De Accidia.

After the sinne of wrath, now wol I speke of the sinne of accidie, or slouth: for envie blindeth the herte of a man, and ire troubleth a man, and accidie maketh him hevy, thoughtful, and wrawe. Envie and ire maken bitternesse in herte, which bitternesse is mother of accidie, and benimeth him the love of alle goodnesse; than is accidie the

anguish of a trouble herte. And Seint Augustine sayth: It is annoye of goodnesse and annoye of harme. Certes this is a damnable sinne, for it doth wrong to Jesu Crist, in as moche as it benimeth the service that men shulde do to Crist with alle diligence, as sayth Salomon: but accidie doth non swiche diligence. He doth all thing with annoye, and with wrawnesse, slaknesse, and excusation, with idelnesse and unlust. For which the book sayth: Accursed be he that doth the service of God negligently. Than is accidie enemie to every estate of man. For certes the estate of man is in three maners: either it is the estate of innocence, as was the estate of Adam, before that he fell into sinne, in which estate he was holden to werk, as in herying and adoring of God. Another estate is the estate of sinful men: in which estate men ben holden to labour in praying to God, for amendement of hir sinnes, and that he wold graunt hem to rise out of hir sinnes. Another estate is the estate of grace, in which estate he is holden to werkes of penitence: and certes, to all thise thinges is accidie enemie and contrary, for he loveth no besinesse at all. Now certes, this foule sinne of accidie is eke a ful gret enemie to the livelode of the body; for it ne hath no purveaunce ayenst temporel necessitee; for it forsleutheth, forsluggeth, and destroieth all goodes temporel by recchelesnesse.

The fourth thing is that accidie is like hem that ben in the peine of helle, because of hir slouthe and of hir hevinesse: for they that be damned, ben so bound, that they may neyther do wel ne think wel. Of accidie cometh first, that a man is annoied and accombred to do any goodnesse, and that maketh that God hath abhomination of swiche accidie, as sayth Seint John.

Now cometh slouthe, that wol not suffre no hardnesse ne no penance: for sothly, slouthe is so tendre and so delicat, as sayth Salomon, that he wol suffre non hardnesse ne penance, and therfore he shendeth all that he doth. Ayenst this roten sinne of accidie and slouthe shuld men exercise hemself, and use hemself to do good werkes, and manly and vertuously cachen corage wel to do, thinking that our Lord Jesu Crist quiteth every good deed, be it never so lite. Usage of labour is a gret thing: for it maketh, as sayth Seint Bernard, the labourer to have strong armes and hard sinewes: and slouthe maketh hem feble and tendre. Than cometh drede for to beginne to werke any good werkes: for certes, he that enclineth to sinne, him thinketh it is to gret an emprise for to undertake the werkes of goodnesse, and casteth in his herte, that the circumstances of goodnesse ben so grevous and so chargeant for to suffre, that he dare not undertake to do werkes of goodnesse, as sayth Seint Gregorie.

Now cometh wanhope, that is, despeir of the mercy of God, that cometh somtime of to moche outrageous sorwe, and somtime of to moche drede, imagining that he hath do so moche sinne, that it wolde not availe him, though he wolde repent him, and forsake sinne: thurgh which despeire or drede, he abandoneth all his herte to every maner sinne, as sayth Seint Augustine. Which dampnable sinne, if it continue unto his end, it is cleped the sinne of the holy gost. This horrible sinne is so perilous, that he that is despeired, ther n'is no felonie, ne no sinne, that he douteth for to do, as shewed wel by Judas. Certes, aboven all sinnes than is this sinne most displesant and most adversarie to Crist. Sothly, he that despeireth him, is like to the coward champion recreant, that flieth withouten nede. Alas! alas! nedeles is he recreant, and nedeles despeired. Certes, the mercy of God is ever redy to the penitent person, and is above all his werkes. Alas! cannot a man bethinke him on the Gospel of Seint Luke, chap. xv. wheras Crist sayeth, that as wel shal ther be joye in heven upon a sinful man that doth penitence, as upon ninety and nine rightful men that neden no penitence? Loke further, in the same Gospel, the joye and the feste of the good man that had lost his sone, whan his sone was retourned with repentance to his fader. Can they not remembre hem also, (as sayth Seint Luke, chap. xxiii.) how that the thefe that was honged beside Jesu Crist, sayd, Lord, remembre on me, whan thou comest in thy regne? Forsoth, said Crist, I say to thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradis. Certes, ther is non so horrible sinne of man, that ne may in his lif be destroyed by penitence, thurgh vertue of the passion and of the deth of Crist. Alas! what nedeth man than to be despeired, sith that his mercy is so redy and large? Axe and have. Than cometh sompnolence, that is, sluggy slumbring, which maketh a man hevy, and dull in body and in soule, and this sinne cometh of slouthe: and certes, the time that by way of reson man shuld not slepe, is by the morwe, but if ther were cause resonable. For sothly in the morwe tide is most covenable to a man to say his prayers, and for to think on God, and to honour God, and to yeve almesse to the poure that comen first in the name of Jesu Crist. Lo, what sayth Salomon? Who so wol by the morwe awake to seke me, he shal find me. Than cometh negligence or recchelesnesse that recketh of nothing. And though that ignorance be mother of all harmes, certes, negligence is the norice. Negligence ne doth no force, whan he shal do a thing, whether he do it wel or badly.

The remedie of thise two sinnes is, as sayth the wise man, that he that dredeth God, spareth not to do that him ought to do; and he that loveth God, he wol do diligence to plese God by his werkes, and abandon himself, with all his might, wel for to do. Than cometh idelnesse, that is the yate of all harmes. An idel man is like to a place that hath no walles; theras deviles may enter on every side, or shoot at him at discoverte by temptation on every side. This idelnesse is the thurrok of all wicked and vilains thoughtes, and of all jangeles, trifles, and all ordure. Certes heven is yeven to hem that will labour, and not to idel folk. Also David sayth, they ne be not in the labour of men, ne they shul not ben whipped with men, that is to say, in purgatorie. Certes than semeth it they shul ben tormented with the devil in helle, but if they do penance.

Than cometh the sinne that men clepen *Tarditas*, as whan a man is latered, or taryed or he wol tourne to God: and certes, that is a gret folie. He is like him that falleth in the diche, and wol not arise. And this vice cometh of false hope, that thinketh that he shal live long, but that hope failleth ful oft.

Than cometh Lachesse, that is, he that whan he beginneth any good werk, anon he wol forlete it and stint, as don they that have any wight to governe, and ne take of him no more kepe, anon as

they find any contrary or any annoy. Thise ben the newe shepherdes, that let hir shepe wetingly go renne to the wolf, that is in the breres, and do no force of hir owen governance. Of this cometh poverte and destruction, both of spirituel and temporel thinges. Than cometh a maner coldnesse, that freseth all the herte of man. Than cometh undevotion, thurgh which a man is so blont, as sayth Seint Bernard, and hath swiche langour in his soule, that he may neyther rede ne sing in holy chirche, ne here ne thinke of no devotion, ne travaile with his hondes in no good werk, that it n'is to him unsavory and all apalled. Than wexeth he sluggish and slombry, and sone wol he be wroth, and sone is enclined to hate and to envie. Than cometh the sinne of worldly sorwe swiche as is cleped *Tristitia*, that sleth a man, as sayth Seint Poule. For certes swiche sorwe werketh to the deth of the soule and of the body also, for therof cometh, that a man is annoied of his owen lif. Wherfore swiche sorwe shorteth the lif of many a man, or that his time is come by way of kinde.

Remedium Accidiæ.

Ayenst this horrible sinne of accidie, and the braunches of the same, ther is a vertue that is called *fortitudo* or strength, that is, an affection, thurgh which a man despiseth noyous thinges. This vertue is so mighty and so vigorous, that it dare withstond mightily, and wrastle ayenst the assautes of the devil, and wisely kepe himself fro periles that ben wicked; for it enhaunseth and enforceth the soule, right as accidie abateth and maketh it feble: for this *fortitudo* may endure with long sufferance the travailles that ben covenable.

This vertue hath many spices; the first is cleped magnanimitee, that is to say, gret corage. For certes ther behoveth gret corage ayenst accidie, lest that it swalowe the soule by the sinne of sorwe, or destroy it with wanhope. Certes, this vertue maketh folk to undertake hard and grevous thinges by hir owen will, wisely and resonably. And for as moche as the devil fighteth ayenst man more by queintise and sleight than by strength, therfore shal a man withstond him by wit, by reson, and by discretion. Than ben ther the vertues of feith, and hope in God and in his seintes, to acheven and accomplice the good werkes, in the which he purposeth fermely to continue. Than cometh seuretee or sikernesse, and that is whan a man ne douteth no travaile in time coming of the good werkes that he hath begonne. Than cometh magnificence, that is to say, whan a man doth and performeth gret werkes of goodnesse, that he hath begonne, and that is the end why that men shuld do good werkes. For in the accomplishing of good werkes lieth the gret guerdon. Than is ther constance, that is stablenesse of corage, and this shuld be in herte by stedfast feith, and in mouth, and in bering, in chere, and in dede. Eke ther ben mo special remedies ayenst accidie, in divers werkes, and in consideration of the peines of helle and of the joyes of heven, and in trust of the grace of the holy gost, that will yeve him might to performe his good entent.

De Avaritia.

After accidie wol I speke of avarice, and of coveitise. Of which sinne Seint Poule sayth: The rote of all harmes is coveitise. For sothly, whan the herte of man is confounded in itself and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the comfort of God, than seketh he an idel solas of worldly thinges.

Avarice, after the description of Seint Augustine, is a likerousnesse in herte to have erthly thinges. Som other folk sayn, that avarice is for to purchase many erthly thinges, and nothing to yeve to hem that han nede. And understond wel, that avarice standeth not only in land ne catel, but som time in science and in glorie, and in every maner outrageous thing is avarice. And the difference betwene avarice and coveitise is this: coveitise is for to coveit swiche thinges as thou hast not; and avarice is to withholde and kepe swiche thinges as thou hast, without rightful nede. Sothly, this avarice is a sinne that is ful dampnable, for all holy writ curseth it, and speketh ayenst it, for it doth wrong to Jesu Crist; for it bereveth him the love that men to him owen, and tourneth it backward ayenst all reson, and maketh that the avaricious man hath more hope in his catel than in Jesu Crist, and doth more observance in keping of his tresour, than he doth in the service of Jesu Crist. And therfore sayth Seint Poul, That an avaricious man is the thraldome of idolatrie.

What difference is ther betwix an idolastre, and an avaricious man? But that an idolastre peraventure ne hath not but o maumet or two, and the avaricious man hath many: for certes, every florein in his coffre is his maumet. And certes, the sinne of maumetrie is the first that God defended in the ten commandments, as bereth witnesse, *Exod. Cap.* xx. Thou shalt have no false goddes before me, ne thou shalt make to thee no graven thing. Thus is an avaricious man, that loveth his tresour before God, an idolastre. And thurgh this cursed sinne of avarice and coveitise cometh thise hard lordships, thurgh which men ben distreined by tallages, customes and cariages, more than hir dutee or reson is: ano eke take they of hir bondmen amercementes, which might more resonably be called extortions than amercementes. Of which amercementes, or raunsoming of bondmen, som lordes stewardes say, that it is rightful, for as moche as a cherl hath no temporel thing, that it ne is his lordes, as they say. But certes, thise lordshippes don wrong, that bereven hir bondmen thinges that they never yave hem. *Augustinus de Civitate Dei, Libro* ix. Soth is, that the condition of thraldom, and the first cause of thraldom was for sinne. *Genesis* v.

Thus may ye see, that the gilt deserved thraldom, but not nature. Wherfore thise lordes ne shuld not to moche glorifie hem in hir lordshipes, sith that they by naturel condition ben not lordes of hir thralles, but that thraldom came first by the deserte of sinne. And furtherover, ther as the lawe sayth, that temporel goodes of bondfolk ben the goodes of hir lord: ye, that is for to understond, the goodes of the emperour, to defend hem in hir right, but not to robbe hem ne to reve hem. Therfore sayth Seneca: The prudent shuld live benignely with the thral. Tho that thou clepest thy thralles, ben Goddes peple: for humble folk ben Cristes frendes; they ben contubernial with the Lord thy king.

Thinke also, that of swiche seed as cherles springen of swiche seed springen lordes : as wel may the cherl be saved as the Lord. The same deth that taketh the cherl, swiche deth taketh the Lord. Wherfore I rede, do right so with thy cherl as thou woldest that thy Lord did with thee, if thou were in his plight. Every sinful man is a cherl to sinne : I rede thee, thou Lord, that thou reule thee in swiche wise, that thy cherles rather love thee than drede thee. I wote wel, that ther is degree above degree, as reson is, and skill is, that men do hir devoir, ther as it is due : but certes, extortion, and despit of your underlinges, is dampnable.

And furthermore understond wel, that thise conqueroures or tyrantes maken ful oft thralles of hem, that ben borne of as royal blood as ben they that hem conqueren. This name of Thraldom was never erst couthe, til that Noe sayd, that his sone Cham shuld be thrall to his brethren for his sinne. What say we than of hem that pille and don extortions to holy Chirche ? Certes, the swerd that men yeven first to a knight whan he is newe dubbed, signifieth, that he shuld defend holy Chirche, and not robbe it ne pille it : and who so doth is traitour to Crist. As saith Seint Augustine, Tho ben the devils wolves, that strangelen the shepe of Jesu Crist, and don worse than wolves : for sothly, whan the wolf hath full his wombe, he stinteth to strangle shepe : but sothly, the pillours and destroiers of holy Chirches goodes ne do not so, for they ne stint never to pille. Now as I have sayd, sith so is, that sinne was first cause of thraldom, than is it thus, that at the time that all this world was in sinne, than was all this world in thraldom, and in subjection : but certes, sith the time of grace came, God ordeined, that som folk shuld be more high in estate and in degree, and som folk more lowe, and that everich shuld be served in his estate and his degree. And therfore in som contrees ther as they ben thralles, whan they have tourned hem to the feith, they make hir thralles free out of thraldom : and therfore certes the Lord oweth to his man, that the man oweth to the Lord. The Pope clepeth himself servant of the servants of God. But for as moche as the estate of holy Chirche ne might not have ben, ne the commun profite might not have be kept, ne pees ne rest in erthe, but if God had ordeined, that som men have higher degree, and som men lower ; therfore was soveraintee ordeined to kepe, and mainteine, and defend hire underlinges or hire subjectes in reson, as ferforth as it lieth in hire power, and not to destroy hem ne confound. Wherfore I say, that thilke lordes that ben like wolves, that devoure the possessions or the catel of poure folk wrongfully, withouten mercy or mesure, they shul receive by the same mesure that they have mesured to poure folk the mercy of Jesu Crist, but they it amende. Now cometh deceit betwix marchant and marchant. And thou shalt understond, that marchandise is in two maners, that on is bodily, and that other is gostly : that on is honest and leful, and that other is dishonest and unleful. The bodily marchandise, that is leful and honest, is this : that ther as God hath ordeined, that a regne or a contree is suffisant to himself, than it is honest and leful, that of the haboundaunce of this contree men helpe another contree that is nedy : and therfore ther must be marchants to bring fro on contree to another hir marchandise. That other marchandise, that men haunten with fraude, and trecherie, and deceit, with lesinges and false othes, is right cursed and dampnable. Spirituel marchandise is proprely simonie, that is, ententif desire to buy thing spirituel, that is, thing which apperteineth to the seintuarie of God, and to the cure of the soule. This desire, if so be that a man do his diligence to performe it, al be it that his desire ne take non effect, yet it is to him a dedly sinne : and if he be ordered, he is irreguler. Certes simonie is cleped of Simon Magus, that wold have bought for temporel catel the yefte that God had yeven by the holy gost to Seint Peter, and to the Apostles : and therfore understond ye, that both he that selleth and he that byeth thinges spirituel ben called Simoniackes, be it by catel, be it by procuring, or by fleshly praier of his frendes fleshly frendes, or spirituel frendes, fleshly in two maners, as by kinrede or other frendes : sothly, if they pray for him that is not worthy and able, it is simonie, if he take the benefice ; and if he be worthy and able, ther is non. That other maner is, whan man, or woman, prayeth for folk to avancen hem only for wicked fleshly affection which they have unto the persons, and that is foule simonie. But certes, in service, for which men yeven thinges spirituel unto hir servants, it must be understonde, that the service must be honest, or elles not, and also, that it be without bargaining, and that the person be able. For (as sayth Seint Damascen) all the sinnes of the world, at regard of this sinne, ben as thing of nought, for it is the gretest sinne that may be after the sinne of Lucifer and of Anticrist : for by this sinne God forleseth the chirche and the soule, which he bought with his precious blood, by hem that yeven chirches to hem that ben not digne, for they put in theves, that stelen the soules of Jesu Crist, and destroyen his patrimonie. By swiche undigne preestes and curates, han lewed men lesse reverence of the sacramentes of holy chirche : and swiche yevers of chirches put the children of Crist out, and put into chirches the divels owen sones : they sellen the soules that lambes shuld kepe to the wolf, which strangleth hem : and therfore shall they never have part of the pasture of lambes, that is, in the blisse of heven. Now cometh hasardrie with his apertenauntes, as tables and rafles, of which cometh deceit, false othes, chidings, and all raving, blaspheming, and reneying of God, hate of his neyghbours, wast of goodes, mispending of time, and somtime manslaughter. Certes, hasardours ne mow not be without grete sinne. Of avarice comen eke lesinges, theft, false witnesse, and false othes : and ye shul understonde, that these be gret sinnes, and expresse ayenst the commandements of God, as I have sayd. False witnesse is eke in word, and in dede : in word, as for to bereve thy neighbours good name by thy false witnesse, or bereve him his catel or his heritage by thy false witnessing, whan thou for ire, or for mede, or for envie, berest false witnesse, or accusest him, or excusest thyself falsely. Ware ye questmongers and notaries : certes, for false witnessing, was Susanna in ful gret sorwe and peine, and many another mo. The sinne of theft is also expresse ayenst Goddes hest, and that in

two maners, temporel, and spirituel: the temporel theft is, as for to take thy neighbours catel ayenst his will, be it by force or by sleight; be it in meting or mesure; by steling; by false enditements upon him; and in borowing of thy neighbours catel, in entent never to pay it ayen, and semblable thinges. Spirituel theft is sacrilege, that is to say, hurting of holy thinges, or of thinges sacred to Crist, in two maners; by reson of the holy place, as chirches or chirches hawes; (for every vilains sinne, that men don in swiche places, may be called sacrilege, or every violence in semblable places) also they that withdrawe falsely the rentes and rightes that longen to holy chirche; and plainly and generally, sacrilege is to reve holy thing fro holy place, or unholy thing out of holy place, or holy thing out of unholy place.

Remedium Avaritiæ.

Now shul ye understond, that releving of avarice is misericorde and pitee largely taken. And men might axe, why that misericorde and pitee are releving of avarice; certes, the avaricious man sheweth no pitee ne misericorde to the nedeful man. For he deliteth him in the keping of his tresour, and not in the rescouing ne releving of his even Cristen. And therfore speke I first of misericorde. Than is misericorde (as sayth the Philosophre) a vertue, by which the corage of man is stirred by the misese of him that is misesed. Upon which misericorde foloweth pitee, in performing and fulfilling of charitable werkes of mercie, helping and comforting him that is misesed. And certes, this meveth a man to misericorde of Jesu Crist, that he yave himself for our offence, and suffred deth for misericorde, and foryaf us our original sinnes, and therby relesed us fro the peine of hell, and amenused the peines of purgatory by penitence, and yeveth us grace wel to do, and at last the blisse of heven. The spices of misericorde ben for to lene, and eke for to yeve, and for to foryeve and relese, and for to have pitee in herte, and compassion of the mischefe of his even Cristen, and also to chastise ther as nede is. Another maner of remedy ayenst avarice, is resonable largesse: but sothly, here behoveth the consideration of the grace of Jesu Crist, and of the temporel goodes, and also of the goodes perdurable that Jesu Crist yave to us, and to have remembrance of the deth which he shal receive, he wote not whan: and eke that he shal forgon all that he hath, save only that which he hath dispended in good werkes.

But for as moche as som folk ben unmesurable, men oughten for to avoid and eschue fool-largesse, the whiche men clepen waste. Certes, he that is fool-large, he yeveth not his catel, but he leseth his catel. Sothly, what thing that he yeveth for vaine-glory, as to minstrals, and to folk that bere his renome in the world, he hath do sinne therof, and non almesse: certes, he leseth foule his good, that ne seketh with the yefte of his good nothing but sinne. He is like to an hors that seketh rather to drink drovy or troubled water, than for to drink water of the clere well. And for as moche as they yeven ther as they shuld nat yeven, to hem apperteineth thilke malison, that Crist shal yeve at the day of dome to hem that shul be dampned.

De Gulâ.

After avarice cometh glotonie, which is expresse ayenst the commandement of God. Glotonie is unmesurable appetit to ete or to drinke: or elles to do in ought to the unmesurable appetit and disordeined coveitise to ete or drinke. This sinne corrupted all this world, as is wel shewed in the sinne of Adam and of Eve. Loke also what sayth Seint Poule of glotonie. Many (sayth he) gon, of which I have ofte said to you, and now I say it weping, that they ben the enemies of the crosse of Crist, of which the end is deth, and of which hir wombe is hir God and hir glorie; in confusion of hem that so serven erthly thinges. He that is usant to this sinne of glotonie, he ne may no sinne withstond, he must be in servage of all vices, for it is the devils horde, ther he hideth him and resteth. This sinne hath many spices. The first is dronkennesse, that is the horrible sepulture of mannes reson: and therfore whan a man is dronke, he hath lost his reson: and this is dedly sinne. But sothly, whan that a man is not wont to strong drinkes, and peraventure ne knoweth not the strength of the drinke, or hath feblenesse in his hed, or hath travailled, thurgh which he drinketh the more, al be he sodenly caught with drinke, it is no dedly sinne, but venial. The second spice of glotonie is, that the spirit of a man wexeth all trouble for dronkennesse, and bereveth a man the discretion of his wit. The thridde spice of glotonie is, whan a man devoureth his mete, and hath not rightful maner of eting. The fourthe is, whan thurgh the gret abundance of his mete, the humours in his body ben distempered. The fifthe is, foryetfulnesse by to moche drinking, for which somtime a man forgeteth by the morwe, what he did over eve.

In other maner ben distinct the spices of glotonie, after Seint Gregorie. The first is, for to ete before time. The second is, whan a man geteth him to delicat mete or drinke. The thridde is, whan men taken to moche over mesure. The fourth is curiositee, with gret entent to maken and appareille his mete. The fifth is, for to ete gredily. Thise ben the five fingers of the devils hond, by which he draweth folk to the sinne.

Remedium Gulæ.

Ayenst glotonie the remedie is abstinence, as sayth Galien: but that I holde not meritorie, if he do it only for the hele of his body. Seint Augustine wol that abstinence be don for vertue, and with patience. Abstinence (sayth he) is litel worth, but if a man have good will therto, and but it be enforced by patience and charitee, and that men don it for Goddes sake, and in hope to have the blisse in heven.

The felawes of abstinence ben attemperance, that holdeth the mene in alle thinges; also shame, that escheweth all dishonestee; suffisance, that seketh no riche metes ne drinkes, ne doth no force of non outrageous appareilling of mete; mesure also, that restreineth by reson the unmesurable appetit of eting: sobernesse also, that restreineth the outrage of drinke; sparing also, that restreineth the delicat ese, to sit long at mete, wherfore som folk standen of hir owen will whan they ete, because they wol ete at lesse leiser.

De Luxuriâ.

After glotonie cometh lecherie, for thise two sinnes ben so nigh cosins, that oft time they wol not depart. God wote this sinne is ful displesant to God, for he said himself; Do no lecherie. And therfore he putteth gret peine ayenst this sinne. For in the old lawe, if a woman thrall were taken in this sinne, she shuld be beten with staves to the deth: and if she were a gentilwoman, she shuld be slain with stones: and if she were a bishoppes doughter, she shuld be brent by Goddes commandement. Moreover, for the sinne of lecherie God dreint all the world, and after that he brent five citees with thonder and lightning, and sanke hem doun into hell.

Now let us speke than of the said stinking sinne of lecherie, that men clepen avoutrie, that is of wedded folk, that is to say, if that on of hem be wedded, or elles both. Seint John sayth, That avouterers shul ben in helle in a stacke brenning of fire and of brimstone, in fire for hir lecherie, in brimstone for the stenche of hir ordure. Certes the breking of this sacrament is an horrible thing: it was made of God himself in Paradis, and confermed by Jesu Crist, as witnesseth Seint Mathew in the Gospel: a man shal let fader and moder, and take him to his wif, and they shal be two in on flesh. This sacrament betokeneth the knitting together of Crist and holy chirche. And not only that God forbade avoutrie in dede, but also he commanded, that thou shuldest not coveit thy neighboures wif. In this heste (sayth Seint Augustine) is forboden all maner coveitise to do lecherie. Lo, what sayth Seint Mathew in the Gospel, That who so seeth a woman, to coveitise of his lust, he hath don lecherie with hire in his herte. Here may ye see, that not only the dede of this sinne is forboden, but eke the desire to don that sinne. This cursed sinne annoyeth grevously hem that it haunt: and first to the soule, for he obligeth it to sinne and to peine of deth, which is perdurable; and to the body annoyeth it grevously also, for it drieth him and wasteth, and shent him, and of his blood he maketh sacrifice to the fend of helle: it wasteth eke his catel and his substance. And certes, if it be a foule thing a man to waste his catel on women, yet is it a fouler thing, whan that for swiche ordure women dispenden upon men hir catel and hir substance. This sinne, as sayth the Prophet, bereveth man and woman hir good fame and all hir honour, and it is ful plesant to the devil: for therby winneth he the moste partie of this wretched world. And right as a marchant deliteth him most in that chaffare which he hath most avantage and profite of, right so deliteth the fend in this ordure.

This is that other hond of the devil, with five fingers, to cacche the peple to his vilanie. The first fingre is the foole loking of the foole woman and of the foole man, that sleth right as the Basilicok sleth folk by venime of his sight: for the coveitise of the eyen foloweth the coveitise of the herte. The second fingre is the vilains touching in wicked maner. And therfore sayth Salomon, that who so toucheth and handleth a woman, he fareth as the man that handleth the scorpion, which stingeth and sodenly sleth thurgh his enveniming; or as who so that toucheth warme pitch it shendeth his fingers. The thridde is foule wordes, whiche fareth like fire, which right anon brenneth the herte. The fourth finger is kissing: and trewely he were a gret foole that wold kisse the mouthe of a brenning oven or of a fourneis; and more fooles ben they that kissen in vilainie, for that mouth is the mouth of helle; and namely thise olde dotardes holoure, which wol kisse, and flicker, and besie hemself, though they may nought do. Certes they ben like to houndes: for an hound whan he cometh by the roser, or by other bushes, though so be that he may not pisse, yet wol he heve up his leg and make a contenance to pisse. And for that many man weneth that he may not sinne for no likerousnesse that he doth with his wif, trewely that opinion is false: God wote a man may slee himself with his owen knif, and make himself dronken of his owen tonne. Certes be it wif, be it childe, or any worldly thing, that he loveth before God, it is his maumet, and he is an idolastre. A man shuld love his wif by discretion, patiently and attemprely, and than is she as though it were his suster. The fifth fingre of the divels hond, is the stinking dede of lecherie. Trewely the five fingers of glotonie the fend putteth in the wombe of a man: and with his five fingers of lecherie he gripeth him by the reines, for to throwe him into the fourneis of helle, ther as they shul have the fire and the wormes that ever shul lasten, and weping and wayling, and sharpe hunger and thurst, and grislinesse of divels, whiche shul all-to-trede hem withouten respite and withouten ende. Of lecherie, as I sayd, sourden and springen divers spices: as fornication, that is betwene man and woman which ben not maried, and is dedly sinne, and ayenst nature. All that is enemy and destruction to nature, is ayenst nature. Parfay the reson of a man eke telleth him wel that it is dedly sinne; for as moche as God forbad lecherie. And Seint Poule yeveth hem the regne, that n'is dewe to no wight but to hem that don dedely sinne. Another sinne of lecherie is, to bereven a maid of hire maidenhed, for he that so doth, certes he casteth a mayden out of the highest degree that is in this present lif, and bereveth hire thilke precious fruit that the book clepeth the hundreth fruit. I ne can say it non otherwise in English, but in Latine it hight *Centesimus fructus.* Certes he that so doth, is the cause of many damages and vilanies, mo than any man can reken: right as he somtime is cause of all dammages that bestes do in the feld, that breketh the hedge of the closure, thurgh which he destroyeth that may not be restored: for certes no more may maidenhed be restored, than an arme, that is smitten fro the body, may returne ayen and wexe: she may have mercy, this wote I wel, if that she have will to do penitence, but never shal it be but that she is corrupte. And all be it so that I have spoke somwhat of avoutrie, it is good to shewe the perilcs that longen to avoutrie, for to eschewe that foule sinne. Avoutrie, in Latine, is for to saye, approching of another mannes bedde, thurgh whiche tho, that somtime were on fleshe, abandone hir bodies to other persons. Of this sinne, as sayth the wise man, folow many harmes: firste breking of feith; and certes feith is the key of Cristendom, and whan that key is broken and lorne, sothly Cristendom is lorne, and stont vaine and without fruit. This sinne also is theft, for theft generally is to reve a wight

his thinges ayenst his will. Certes, this is the foulest theft that may be, whan that a woman steleth hire body from hire husbond, and yeveth it to hire holour to defoule it: and steleth hire soule fro Crist, and yeveth it to the devil: this is a fouler thefte than for to breke a chirche and stele away the chalice, for thise avouterers breken the temple of God spirituelly, and stelen the vessell of grace; that is the body and the soule: for which Criste shal destroy hem, as sayth Seint Poule. Sothly of this theft douted gretly Joseph, whan that his Lordes wif prayed him of vilainie, whan he sayde: Lo, my Lady, how my Lord hath take to me under my warde all that he hath in this world, ne nothing is out of my power, but only ye that ben his wif: and how shuld I than do this wickednesse, and sinne so horribly ayenst God, and ayenst my Lord? God it forbede. Alas! all to litel is swiche trouth now yfounde. The thridde harme is the filth, thurgh which they breke the commandement of God, and defoule the auter of matrimonies, that is Crist. For certes, in so moche as the sacrament of mariage is so noble and so digne, so moche is it the greter sinne for to breke it: for God made mariage in Paradis in the estate of innocencie, to multiplie mankinde to the service of God, and therfore is the breking therof the more grevous, of which breking come false heires oft time, that wrongfully occupien folkes heritages: and therfore wol Crist put hem out of the regne of heven, that is heritage to good folk. Of this breking cometh eke oft time, that folk unware wedde or sinne with hir owen kinrede: and namely thise harlottes, that haunten bordelles of thise foule women, that may be likened to a commune gong, wheras men purge hir ordure. What say we also of putours, that live by the horrible sinne of puterie, and constreine women to yelde hem a certain rent of hir bodily puterie, ye, somtime his owen wif or his childe, as don thise baudes? certes, thise ben cursed sinnes. Understond also, that avoutrie is set in the ten commandements betwene theft and manslaughter, for it is the gretest theft that may be, for it is theft of body and of soule, and it is like to homicide, for it kerveth atwo and breketh atwo hem that first were made on flesh. And therfore by the old lawe of God they shuld be slaine, but nathelesse, by the lawe of Jesu Crist, that is the lawe of pitee, whan he sayd to the woman that was found in avoutrie, and shuld have be slain with stones, after the will of the Jewes, as was hir lawe; Go, sayd Jesu Crist, and have no more will to do sinne; sothly, the vengeance of avoutrie is awarded to the peine of helle, but if so be that it be discombered by penitence. Yet ben ther mo spices of this cursed sinne, as whan that on of hem is religious, or elles both, or of folk that ben entred into ordre, as sub-deken, deken, or preest, or hospitalers: and ever the higher that he is in ordre, the greter is the sinne. The thinges that gretly agrege hir sinne, is the breking of hir avow of chastitee, whan they received the ordre: and moreover soth is, that holy ordre is chefe of all the tresorie of God, and is a special signe and marke of chastitee, to shew that they ben joined to chastitee, which is the moste precious lif that is: and thise ordered folk ben specially titled to God, and of the special meinie of God: for which, whan they don dedly sinne, they ben the special traitours of God and of his peple, for they live by the peple to praye for the peple, and whiles they ben swiche traitours hir prayeres availe not to the peple. Preestes ben as angels, as by the mysterie of hir dignitee: but forsoth Seint Poule saith, That Sathanas transfourmeth him in an angel of light. Sothly, the preest that haunteth dedly sinne, he may be likened to an angel of derkenesse, transfourmed into an angel of light: he semeth an angel of light, but for soth he is an angel of derkenesse. Swiche preestes be the sones of Hely, as is shewed in the book of Kinges, that they were the sones of Belial, that is, the divel. Belial is to say, withouten juge, and so faren they; hem thinketh that they be free, and have no juge, no more than hath a free boll, that taketh which cow that him liketh in the toun. So faren they by women; for right as on free boll is ynough for all a toun, right so is a wicked preest corruption ynough for all a parish, or for all a countree: thise preestes, as sayth the book, ne cannot minister the mysterie of preesthood to the peple, ne they knowe not God, ne they hold hem not apaied, as saith the book, of sodden flesh that was to hem offred, but they take by force the flesh that is raw. Certes, right so thise shrewes ne hold hem not apaied of rosted flesh and sodden, with which the peple feden hem in gret reverence, but they wol have raw flesh as folkes wives and hir doughters: and certes, thise women that consenten to hir harlotrie, don gret wrong to Crist and to holy Chirche, and to all Halowes, and to all Soules, for they bereven all thise hem that shuld worship Crist and holy Chirche, and pray for Cristen soules: and therfore han swiche preestes, and hir lemmans also that consenten to hir lecherie, the malison of the court Cristen, til they come to amendement. The thridde spice of avoutrie is somtime betwix a man and his wif, and that is, whan they take no regard in hir assembling but only to hir fleshly delit, as saith Seint Jerome, and ne recken of nothing but that they ben assembled because they ben maried; all is good ynough, as thinketh to hem. But in swiche folk hath the divel power, as said the angel Raphael to Tobie, for in hir assembling, they putten Jesu Crist out of hir herte, and yeven hemself to all ordure. The fourth spice is of hem that assemble with hir kinrede, or with hem that ben of on affinitee, or elles with hem with which hir fathers or hir kinred have deled in the sinne of lecherie: this sinne maketh hem like to houndes, that taken no kepe of kinrede. And certes, parentele is in two maners: eyther gostly or fleshly: gostly, is for to delen with hir godsibbes: for right so as he that engendreth a child, is his fleshly father, right so is his godfather his father spirituel: for which a woman may in no lesse sinne assemble with hire godsib, than with hir owen fleshly broder. The fifthe spice is that abhominable sinne, of which abhominable sinne no man unneth ought to speke ne write, natheles it is openly rehersed in holy writ. This cursednesse don men and women in diverse entent and in diverse maner: but though that holy writ speke of horrible sinne, certes holy writ may not be defouled, no more than the sonne that shineth on the myxene. Another sinne apperteineth to lecherie, that cometh in sleping, and this sinne cometh often to hem that ben maidens, and eke to hem that ben corrupt; and this sinne men call

pollution, that cometh of foure maners; somtime it cometh of languishing of the body, for the humours ben to ranke and haboundant in the body of man; somtime of infirmitee, for feblenesse of the vertue retentif, as phisike maketh mention; somtime of surfet of mete and drinke; and somtime of vilains thoughtes that ben enclosed in mannes minde whan he goth to slepe, which may not be withouten sinne; for whiche men must kepe hem wisely, or elles may they sinne ful grevously.

Remedium Luxuriæ.

Now cometh the remedy ayenst lecherie, and that is generally chastitee and continence, that restreineth all disordinate mevings that comen of fleshly talents: and ever the greter merite shal he have that most restreineth the wicked enchaufing or ardure of this sinne; and this is in two maners: that is to say, chastitee in mariage, and chastitee in widewhood. Now shalt thou understonde, that matrimony is leful assembling of man and woman, that receiven by vertue of this sacrement the bonde, thurgh whiche they may not be departed in all hir lif, that is to say, while that they live bothe. This, as saith the book, is a ful gret sacrement; God made it (as I have said) in paradis, and wold himself be borne in mariage: and for to halowe mariage he was at a wedding, wheras he tourned water into wine, whiche was the first miracle that he wrought in erthe before his disciples. The trewe effect of mariage clenseth fornication, and replenisheth holy chirche of good lignage, for that is the ende of mariage, and chaungeth dedly sinne into venial sinne betwene hem that ben wedded, and maketh the hertes all on of hem that ben ywedded, as wel as the bodies. This is veray mariage that was established by God, er that sinne began, whan naturel lawe was in his right point in paradis; and it was ordeined, that o man shuld have but o woman, and o woman but o man, as sayth Seint Augustine, by many resons.

First, for mariage is figured betwix Crist and holy chirche; and another is, for a man is hed of the woman; (algate by ordinance it shuld be so;) for if a woman had mo men than on, than shuld she have mo hedes than on, and that were an horrible thing before God; and also a woman mighte not plese many folk at ones: and also ther shuld never be pees ne rest among hem, for everich of hem wold axe his owen right. And furthermore, no man shuld knowe his owen engendrure, ne who shuld have his heritage, and the woman shuld be the lesse beloved for the time that she were conjunct to many men.

Now cometh how that a man shuld bere him with his wif, and namely in two thinges, that is to say, in suffrance and in reverence, and this shewed Crist whan he firste made woman. For he ne made hire of the hed of Adam, for she shuld not claime to gret lordshippe; for ther as the woman hath the maistrie, she maketh to moche disarray: ther nede non ensamples of this, the experience that we have day by day ought ynough suffice. Also certes, God ne made not woman of the foot of Adam, for she shuld not be holden to lowe, for she cannot patiently suffer: but God made woman of the rib of Adam, for woman shuld be felaw unto man. Man shuld bere him to his wif in feith, in trouth, and in love; as sayth Seint Poule, that a man shuld love his wif, as Crist loved holy chirche, that loved it so wel that he died for it: so shuld a man for his wif, if it were nede.

Now how that a woman shuld be subget to hire husbond, that telleth Seint Peter; first in obedience. And, eke as sayth the decree, a woman that is a wif, as long as she is a wif, she hath non auctoritee to swere ne bere witnesse, without leve of hire husbonde, that is hire lord; algate he shuld be so by reson. She shuld also serve him in all honestee, and ben attempre of hire array. I wete wel that they shuld set hir entent to plese hir husbonds, but not by queintise of hir array. Seint Jerom sayth: wives that ben appareilled in silke and precious purple, ne mow not cloth hem in Jesu Crist. Seint Gregorie sayth also: that no wight seketh precious array, but only for vain glorie to be honoured the more of the peple. It is a gret folie, a woman to have a faire array outward, and hireself to be foule inward. A wif shuld also be mesurable in loking, in bering, and in laughing, and discrete in all hire wordes and hire dedes, and above all worldly thinges, she shulde love hire husbonde with all hire herte, and to him be trewe of hire body: so shuld every husbond eke be trewe to his wif: for sith that all the body is the husbondes, so shuld hire herte be also, or elles ther is betwix hem two, as in that, no parfit mariage. Than shul men understond, that for three thinges a man and his wif fleshly may assemble. The first is, for the entent of engendrure of children, to the service of God, for certes that is the cause final of matrimonie. Another cause is, to yelde eche of hem to other the dettes of hir bodies: for neyther of hem hath power of his owen bodie. The thridde is, for to eschew lecherie and vilanie. The fourth is for soth dedly sinne. As to the first, it is meritorie: the second also, for, as sayth the decree, she hath merite of chastitee, that yeldeth to hire husbond the dette of hire body, ye though it be ayenst hire liking, and the lust of hire herte. The thridde maner is venial sinne; trewely, scarsely may any of thise be without venial sinne, for the corruption and for the delit therof. The fourth maner is for to understond, if they assemble only for amourous love, and for non of the foresaid causes, but for to accomplish hir brenning delit, they recke not how oft, sothly it is dedly sinne: and yet, with sorwe, som folk wol peine hem more to do, than to hir appetit sufficeth.

The second maner of chastitee is for to be a clene widew, and eschue the embracing of a man, and desire the embracing of Jesu Crist. Thise ben tho that have ben wives, and have forgon hir husbondes, and eke women that have don lecherie, and ben releved by penance. And certes, if that a wif coud kepe hire all chast, by licence of hire husbond, so that she yave no cause ne non occasion that he agilted, it were to hire a gret merite. This maner of women, that observen chastitee, must be clene in herte as wel as in body, and in thought, and mesurable in clothing and in contenance, abstinent in eting and drinking, in speking, and in dede, and than is she the vessel or the boiste of the blessed Magdeleine, that fulfilleth holy chirche of good odour. The thridde

maner of chastitee is virginitee, and it behoveth that she be holy in herte, and clene of body, than is she the spouse of Jesu Crist, and she is the lif of angels: she is the preising of this world, and she is as thise martirs in egalitee: she hath in hire, that tonge may not telle, ne herte thinke. Virginitee bare our Lord Jesu Crist, and virgin was himself.

Another remedie against lecherie is specially to withdraw swiche thinges, as yeven occasion to that vilanie: as ese, eting, and drinking: for certes, whan the pot boileth strongly, the best remedie is to withdraw the fire. Sleping long in gret quiet is also a gret nourice to lecherie.

Another remedie ayenst lecherie is, that a man or a woman eschewe the compagnie of hem, by which he douteth to be tempted: for all be it so that the dede be withstonden, yet is ther gret temptation. Sothly a white wall, although it ne brenne not fully with sticking of a candle, yet is the wall black of the leyte. Ful oft time I rede, that no man trust in his owen perfection, but he be stronger than Sampson, or holier than David, or wiser than Salomon.

Now after that I have declared you as I can of the seven dedly sinnes, and som of hir braunches, and the remedies, sothly, if I conde, I wold tell you the ten commandements, but so high doctrine I lete to divines. Natheles, I hope to God they ben touched in this tretise everich of hem alle.

Now for as moche as the second part of penitence stont in confession of mouth, as I began in the first chapitre, I say Seint Augustine saith: Sinne is every word and every dede, and all that men coveiten ayenst the law of Jesu Crist; and this is for to sinne, in herte, in mouth, and in dede, by the five wittes, which ben sight, hering, smelling, tasting or savouring, and feling. Now is it good to understond the circumstances, that agregen moche every sinne. Thou shalt consider what thou art that dost the sinne, whether thou be male or female, yonge or olde, gentil or thrall, free or servant, hole or sike, wedded or single, ordered or unordered, wise or foole, clerk or seculer; if she be of thy kinred, bodily or gostly, or non; if any of thy kinred have sinned with hire or no, and many mo thinges.

Another circumstaunce is this, whether it be don in fornication, or in advoutrie, or no, in maner of homicide or non, a horrible gret sinne or smal, and how long thou hast continued in sinne. The thridde circumstance is the place, ther thou hast don sinne, whether in other mannes houses, or in thin owen, in feld, in chirche, or in chirchhawe, in chirche dedicate, or non. For if the chirche be halowed, and man or woman spille his kinde within that place, by way of sinne or by wicked temptation, the chirche were enterdited til it were reconciled by the Bishop; and if it were a preest that did swiche vilanie, the terme of all his lif he shuld no more sing Masse: and if he did, he shuld do deldy sinne, at every time that he so song Masse. The fourth circumstance is, by whiche mediatours, as by messagers, or for enticement, or for consentment, to bere compagnie with felawship; for many a wretche, for to bere felawship, wol go to the divel of helle. Wherfore, they that eggen or consenten to the sinne, ben partners of the sinne, and of the dampnation of the sinner. The fifth circumstance is, how many times that he hath sinned, if it be in his minde, and how oft he hath fallen. For he that oft falleth in sinne, he despiseth the mercy of God, and encreseth his sinne, and is unkind to Crist, and he waxeth the more feble to withstand sinne, and sinneth the more lightly, and the later ariseth, and is more slow to shrive him, and namely to him that hath ben his confessour. For which that folk, whan they fall ayen to hir old folies, either they forleten hir old confessour al utterly, or elles they departen hir shrift in divers places: but sothly swiche departed shrift deserveth no mercie of God for hir sinnes. The sixte circumstance is, why that a man sinneth, as by what temptation; and if himself procure thilke temptation, or by exciting of other folk; or if he sinne with a woman by force or by hire owen assent; or if the woman maugre hire hed have ben enforced or non, this shal she tell, and wheder it were for covetise or poverte, and if it were by hire procuring or non, and swiche other thinges. The seventh circumstance is, in what maner he hath don his sinne, or how that she hath suffered that folk have don to hire. And the same shal the man tell plainly, with all the circumstances, and wheder he hath sinned with commun bordel women or non, or don his sinne in holy times or non, in fasting times or non, or before his shrift, or after his later shrift, and hath peraventure broken therby his penance enjoined, by whos helpe or whos conseil, by sorcerie or crafte, all must be told. All thise thinges, after that they ben gret or smale, engreggen the conscience of man or woman. And eke the preest that is thy juge, may the better be avised of his jugement in yeving of penance, and that shal be after thy contrition. For understond wel, that after the time that a man hath defouled his baptisme by sinne, if he wol come to salvation, ther is non other way but by penance, and shrifte, and satisfaction; and namely by tho two, if ther be a confessour to whom he may shrive him, and that he first be veray contrite and repentant, and the thridde if he have lif to performe it.

Than shal a man loke and consider, that if he wol make a trewe and a profitable confession, ther must be foure conditions. First it must be in sorowful bitternesse of herte, as sayth the King Ezechiel to God; I wol remember all the yeres of my lif in the bitternesse of my herte. This condition of bitternesse hath five signes; The first is, that confession must be shamefast, not for to coveren ne hide his sinne, but for he hath agilted his God and defouled his soule. And hereof sayth Seint Augustin: the herte travaileth for shame of his sinne, and for he hath gret shamfastnesse he is digne to have gret mercie of God. Swiche was the confession of the Publican, that wold not heve up his eyen to heven for he had offended God of heven: for which shamefastnesse he had anon the mercy of God. And therfore saith Seint Augustine: That swiche shamefast folk ben next foryevenesse and mercy. Another signe, is humilitee in confession: of whiche sayth Seint Peter; Humbleth you under the might of God: the hond of God is mighty in confession, for therby God foryeveth thee thy sinnes, for he alone hath the power. And this humilitee shal be in herte, and in signe outwarde: for right as he hath humilitee to God in his herte, right so shuld he humble his body outward to the preest, that sitteth in Goddes

place. For which in no maner, sith that Crist is soveraine, and the preest mene and mediatour betwix Crist and the sinner, and the sinner is last by way of reson, than shuld not the sinner sitte as high as his confessour, but knele before him or at his feet, but if maladie distrouble it: for he shal not take kepe who sitteth ther, but in whos place he sitteth. A man that hath trespassed to a Lord, and cometh for to axe mercie and maken his accorde, and setteth him doun anon by the Lord, men wolde holde him outrageous, and not worthy so sone for to have remission ne mercy. The thridde signe is, that the shrift shuld be ful of teres, if men mowen wepe, and if they mowe not wepe with hir bodily eyen, than let hem wepe in hir herte. Swiche was the confession of Seint Peter; for after that he had forsake Jesu Crist, he went out and wept ful bitterly. The fourth signe is, that he ne lete not for shame to shrive him and shewe his confession. Swiche was the confession of Magdeleine, that ne spared, for no shame of hem that weren at the feste, to go to our Lord Jesu Crist and beknowe to him hire sinnes. The fifthe signe is, that a man or a woman be obeisant to receive the penance that hem is enjoined. For certes Jesu Crist for the gilt of man was obedient to the deth.

The second condition of veray confession is, that it be hastily don: for certes, if a man hadde a dedly wound, ever the lenger that he taried to warishe himself, the more wold it corrupt and haste him to his deth, and also the wound wold be the werse for to hele. And right so fareth sinne, that longe time is in a man unshewed. Certes a man ought hastily to shewe his sinnes for many causes; as for drede of deth, that cometh oft sodenly, and is in no certain what time it shal be, ne in what place; and eke the drenching of o sinne draweth in another: and also the lenger that he tarieth, the ferther is he fro Crist. And if he abide to his last day, scarcely may he shrive him or remembre him of his sinnes, or repent him for the grevous maladie of his deth. And for as moche as he ne hath in his lif herkened Jesu Crist, whan he hath spoken unto him, he shal crie unto our Lord at his last day, and scarcely wol he herken him. And understonde that this condition muste have foure thinges. First that the shrift be purveyed afore, and avised, for wicked hast doth not profite; and that a man con shrive him of his sinnes, be it of pride, or envie, and so forth, with the spices and circumstances; and that he have comprehended in his minde the nombre and the gretnesse of his sinnes, and how longe he hath lien in sinne; and eke that he be contrite for his sinnes, and be in stedfast purpose (by the grace of God) never efte to fall into sinne; and also that he drede and countrewaite himself, that he flee the occasions of sinne, to whiche he is inclined. Also thou shalt shrive thee of all thy sinnes to o man, and not parcelmele to o man, and parcelmele to another; that is to understonde, in entent to depart thy confession for shame or drede, for it is but strangling of thy soule. For certes, Jesu Crist is entierly all good, in him is not imperfection, and therfore either he foryeveth all parfitly, or elles never a dele. I say not that if thou be assigned to thy penitencer for certain sinne, that thou art bounde to shewe him all the remenant of thy sinnes, of whiche thou hast ben shriven of thy curat, but if it like thee of thyn humilitee; this is no departing of shrift. Ne I say not, ther as I speke of division of confession, that if thou have licence to shrive thee to a discrete and an honest preest, and wher thee liketh, and by the licence of thy curat, that thou ne mayest wel shrive thee to him of all thy sinnes: but lete no blot be behind: lete no sinne be untolde as fer as thou hast remembrance. And whan thou shalt be shriven of thy curat, tell him eke all the sinnes that thou hast don sith thou were laste shriven. This is no wicked entente of division of shrift.

Also the veray shrift axeth certain conditions. First that thou shrive thee by thy free will, not constriened, ne for shame of folk, ne for maladie, or swiche other thinges: for it is reson, that he that trespasseth by his free will, that by his free will he confesse his trespas; and that non other man telle his sinne but himself: ne he shal not nay, ne deny his sinne, ne wrath him ayenst the preest for amonesting him to lete his sinne. The second condition is, that thy shrift be lawful, that is to say, that thou that shrivest thee, and eke the preest that hereth thy confession, be veraily in the feith of holy chirche, and that a man ne be not despeired of the mercie of Jesu Crist, as Cain and Judas were. And eke a man muste accuse himself of his owen trespas and not another: but he shal blame and wite himselfe of his owen malice and of his sinne, and non other: but natheles, if that another man be encheson or enticer of his sinne, or the estate of the person be swiche by which his sinne is agregged, or elles that he may not plainly shrive him but he tell the person with whiche he hath sinned, than may he tell, so that his entent ne be not to backbite the person, but only to declare his confession.

Thou ne shalt not also make no lesinges in thy confession for humilitee, peraventure, to say that thou hast committed and don swiche sinnes, of which that thou ne were never gilty. For Seint Augustine sayth; if that thou, because of thin humilitee, makest a lesing on thyself, though thou were not in sinne before, yet arte thou than in sinne thurgh thy lesing. Thou must also shew thy sinne by thy propre mouth, but thou be dombe, and not by no letter: for thou that hast don the sinne, thou shalt have the shame of the confession. Thou shalt not eke peint thy confession, with faire and subtil wordes, to cover the more thy sinne: for than begilest thou thyself, and not the preest: thou must tell it plainly, be it never so foule ne so horrible. Thou shalt eke shrive thee to a preest that is discrete to conseille thee: and eke thou shalt not shrive thee for vaine glorie, ne for ypocrisie, ne for no cause, but only for the doute of Jesu Crist, and the hele of thy soule. Thou shalt not eke renne to the preest al sodenly, to tell him lightly thy sinne, as who telleth a jape or a tale, but avisedly and with good devotion; and generally shrive thee ofte: if thou ofte fall, ofte arise by confession. And though thou shrive thee ofter than ones of sinne which thou hast be shriven of, it is more merite: and, as sayth Seint Augustine, thou shalt have the more lightly relese and grace of God, both of sinne and of peine. And certes ones a yere at the lest way it is lawful to be houseled, for sothely ones a yere all thinges in the erthe renovelen.

Explicit secunda pars Penitentiæ: et sequitur tertia pars.

Now have I told you of veray confession, that is the seconde part of penitence: The thridde part is satisfaction, and that stont most generally in almesse dede and in bodily peine. Now ben ther three maner of almesse: contrition of herte, wher a man offreth himself to God: another is, to have pitee of the defaute of his neighbour: and the thridde is, in yeving of good conseil, gostly and bodily, wher as men have nede, and namely in sustenance of mannes food. And take kepe that a man hath nede of thise thinges generally, he hath nede of food, of clothing, and of herberow, he hath nede of charitable conseilling and visiting in prison and in maladie, and sepulture of his ded body. And if thou maiest not visite the nedeful in prison in thy person, visite hem with thy message and thy yeftes. Thise ben generally the almesses and werkes of charitee, of hem that have temporel richesses, or discretion in conseilling. Of thise werkes shalt thou heren at the day of dome.

This almesse shuldest thou do of thy propre thinges, and hastily, and prively if thou mayest: but natheles, if thou mayest not do it prively, thou shalt not forbere to do almesse, though men see it, so that it be not don for thanke of the world, but only to have thanke of Jesu Crist. For, as witnesseth Seint Mathewe, *Cap.* v. a citee may not be hid that is sette on a mountaine, ne men light not a lanterne, to put it under a bushell, but setten it upon a candlesticke, to lighten the men in the hous: right so shal your light lighten before men, that they mowe see your good werkes, and glorifie your Fader that is in heven.

Now as for to speke of bodily peine, it stont in praiers, in waking, in fasting, and in vertuous teching. Of orisons ye shul understond, that orisons or prayers, is to say, a pitous will of herte, that setteth it in God, and expresseth it by word outward, to remeve harmes, and to have thinges spirituel and perdurable, and somtime temporel thinges. Of which orisons, certes in the orison of the *Paternoster* hath Jesu Crist enclosed most thinges. Certes it is privileged of three thinges in his dignitee, for whiche it is more digne than any other prayer: for that Jesu Crist himself made it: and it is short, for it shuld be coude the more lightly, and to hold it the more esie in herte, and helpe himself the ofter with this orison, and for a man shuld be the lesse wery to say it, and for a man may not excuse him to lerne it, it is so shorte and so esie: and for it comprehendeth in himself all good prayers. The exposition of this holy prayer, that is so excellent and so digne, I betake to the maisters of theologie, save thus moche wol I say, that whan thou prayest, that God shuld foryeve thee thy giltes as thou foryevest hem that have agilted thee, be wel ware that thou be not out of charitee. This holy orison amenuseth eke venial sinne, and therfore it apperteineth specially to penitence.

This prayer must be trewely sayd, and in perfect feith, and that men prayen to God ordinately, discretely, and devoutly: and alway a man shal put his will to be subgette to the will of God. This orison must eke be sayd with gret humblesse and ful pure, and honestly, and not to the annoyance of any man or woman. It must eke be continued with werkes of charitee. It availeth eke ayenst the vices of the soule: for, as sayth Seint Jerome, by fasting ben saved the vices of the flesh, and by prayer the vices of the soule.

After this thou shalt understonde, that bodily peine stont in waking. For Jesu Crist sayth: wake ye and pray ye, that ye ne enter into wicked temptation. Ye shul understond also, that fasting stont in three thinges: in forbering of bodily mete and drinke, in forbering of worldly jolitee, and in forbering of dedly sinne: this is to say, that a man shall kepe him fro dedly sinne with all his might.

And thou shalt understonde also, that God ordeined fasting, and to fasting apperteineth foure thinges. Largenesse to poure folk: gladnesse of herte spirituel: not to be angry ne annoied, ne grutch for he fasteth: and also resonable houre for to ete by mesure, that is to say, a man shal not ete in untime, ne sit the longer at the table, for he fasteth.

Than shalt thou understonde, that bodily peine stont in discipline, or teching, by word, or by writing, or by ensample. Also in wering of here or of stamin, or of habergeons on hir naked flesh for Cristes sake; but ware thee wel that swiche maner penances ne make not thin herte bitter or angry, ne annoied of thyself; for better is to cast away thin here than to cast away the swetenesse of our Lord Jesu Crist. And therfore sayth Seint Poule: clothe you, as they that ben chosen of God in herte, of misericorde, debonairtee, suffrance, and swiche maner of clothing, of whiche Jesu Crist is more plesed than with the heres or habergeons.

Than is discipline eke, in knocking of thy brest, in scourging with yerdes, in kneling, in tribulation, in suffring patiently wronges that ben don to thee, and eke in patient suffring of maladies, or lesing of worldly catel, or wif, or child, or other frendes.

Than shalt thou understond, which thinges distourben penance, and this is in foure maners; that is drede, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is, desperation. And for to speke first of drede, for which he weneth that he may suffre no penance, ther ayenst is remedie for to thinke, that bodily penance is but short and litel at regard of the peine of helle, that is so cruel and so longe, that it lasteth withouten ende.

Now ayenst the shame that a man hath to shrive him, and namely thise Ipocrites, that wold be holden so parfit, that they have no nede to shrive hem, ayenst that shame shuld a man thinke, that by way of reson, he that hath not ben ashamed to do foule thinges, certes him ought not be ashamed to do faire thinges, and that is confessions. A man shuld also thinke, that God seeth and knoweth al his thoughtes, and al his werkes, and to him may nothing be hid ne covered. Men shuld eke remembre hem of the shame that is to come at the day of dome, to hem that ben not penitent in this present lif: for all the creatures in heven, and in erthe, and in helle, shul see apertly all that they hiden in this world.

Now for to speke of the hope of hem, that ben so negligent and slowe to shrive hem: that stondeth in two maners. That on is, that he hopeth for to live long, and for to purchase

moche richesse for his delit, and than he wol shrive him: and, as he sayeth, he may, as him semeth, than timely ynough come to shrift: another is, the surquedrie that he hath in Cristes mercie. Ayenst the first vice, he shal thinke that our lif is in no sikernesse, and eke that all the richesse in this world ben in aventure, and passen as a shadowe on a wall; and, as sayth Seint Gregorie, that it apperteineth to the gret rightwisnesse of God, that never shal the peine stinte of hem, that never wold withdrawe hem from sinne, hir thankes, but ever continue in sinne: for thilke perpetuel will to don sinne shall they have perpetuel peine.

Wanhope is in two maners. The first wanhope is, in the mercie of God: that other is, that they think that they ne might not long persever in goodnesse. The first wanhope cometh of that, he demeth that he hath sinned so gretly and so oft, and so long lyen in sinne, that he shal not be saved. Certes ayenst that cursed wanhope shulde he thinke, that the passion of Jesu Crist is more stronge for to unbinde, than sinne is strong for to binde. Ayenst the second wanhope he shal thinke, that as often as he falleth, he may arisen again by penitence: and though he never so longe hath lyen in sinne, the mercie of Crist is alway redy to receive him to mercie. Ayenst that wanhope that he demeth he shuld not longe persever in goodnesse, he shal think, that the feblenesse of the devil may nothing do, but if men wol suffre him: and eke he shal have strength of the helpe of Jesu Crist, and of all his chirche, and of the protection of angels, if him list.

Than shul men understonde, what is the fruit of penance; and after the wordes of Jesu Crist, it is an endeles blisse of heven, ther joye hath no contrariositee of wo ne grevance; ther all harmes ben passed of this present lif; ther as is sikernesse from the peines of helle; ther as is the blisful compagnie, that rejoycen hem ever mo everich of others joye; ther as the body of man, that whilom was foule and derke, is more clere than the sonne; ther as the body that whilom was sike and freele, feble and mortal, is immortal, and so strong and so hole, that ther ne may nothing appeire it; ther as is neither hunger, ne thurste, ne colde, but every soule replenished with the sight of the parfit knowing of God. This blisful regne mowe men purchase by poverte spirituel, and the glorie by lowlinesse, the plentee of joye by hunger and thurst, and the reste by travaile, and the lif by deth and mortification of sinne: to which life he us bring, that bought us with his precious blood. Amen.

Now preye I to hem alle that herken this litel tretise or reden it, that if ther be any thing in it that liketh hem, that therof they thanken our Lord Jesu Crist, of whom procedeth all witte and all godenesse; and if ther be any thing that displeseth hem, I preye hem also that they arrette it to the defaute of myn unkonning, and not to my wille, that wold fayn have seyde better if I hadde had konning; for oure boke seyth, all that is writen is writen for oure doctrine, and that is myn entente. Wherfore I beseke you mekely for the mercie of God that ye preye for me, that Crist have mercie of me and foryeve me my giltes, [and namely of myn translations and enditinges of worldly vanitees, the which I revoke in my Retractions, as the boke of Troilus, the boke also of Fame, the boke of the five and twenty Ladies, the boke of the Duchesse, the boke of Seint Valentines day of the Parlement of briddes, the tales of Canterbury, thilke that sounen unto sinne, the boke of the Leon, and many an other boke, if they were in my remembraunce, and many a song and many a lecherous lay, Crist of his grete mercie foryeve me the sinne. But of the translation of Boes of consolation, and other bokes of legendes of Seints, and of Omelies, and moralite, and devotion, that thanke I oure Lord Jesu Crist, and his blisful mother, and alle the Seintes in heven, beseking hem that they fro hensforth unto my lyves ende sende me grace to bewaile my giltes, and to stodien to the savation of my soule,] and graunte me grace of verray penance, confession and satisfaction to don in this present lif, thorgh the benigne grace of him, that is king of kinges and preste of alle prestes, that bought us with the precious blode of his herte, so that I mote ben on of hem atte the laste day of dome that shullen be saved; *qui cum Deo patre et Spiritu sancto vivis et regnas Deus per omnia secula. Amen.*

THE END OF THE CANTERBURY TALES.

NOTES

ON THE CANTERBURY TALES.

For a Grammatical and Metrical Analysis of the first eighteen lines, see the Essay &c. p. xlv—xlvii.

Ver. 8. Hath in the Ram] Rather, *the Bolle*. See the reasons in the Introductory Discourse, p. l.

Ver. 13. And Palmeres] The different sorts of Pilgrims are thus distinguished by Dante, *Vita nuova*, p. 80. *Chiamansi* Palmieri, *inquanto vanno oltra mare, laonde molte volte recano la palma*;—Peregrini, *inquanto vanno alla casa di Galizia*;—Romei, *inquanto vanno a Roma*. But he speaks as an Italian. Chaucer seems to consider all Pilgrims to foreign parts as Palmers.

Ver. 20. the Tabard] See Mr. Speght's note, as cited in the Discourse &c. n. 6.

Ver. 29. Wel—eed] *Bien aisés*. The later French usage of *aise* Sing. and *aises* Plur. unaccented, seems to be a corruption.

Ver. 33. And made forward] More properly, *forword*. See below, ver. 831, 50, 54, from the Sax. *Fore-word*, promise. *Made*, contracted from *maked*, is a Dissyllable. See ver. 4361.

Ver. 43. A Knight] The course of adventures of our Knight may be illustrated by those of a real Knight of Chaucer's age, who, for any thing that appears to the contrary, might have been upon this very pilgrimage. His Epitaph is in *Leland's Itin.* v. iii. p. cxi. *Icy gist le noble et vaillant Chivaler* Matheu de Gourney &c.—*qui en sa vie fu a la bataille* de Benamaryn, *et ala apres* a la siege d'Algezire *sur les Sarazines et aussi a les batailles* de L'Esciuse, de Cressy, de Deyngenesse, de Peyteres, de Nazare, d'Ozrey *et a plusours autres batailles et asseges en les quex il gaigna noblement graunt los et honour*—. He died in 1406 at the age of 96. Why Chaucer should have chosen to bring his Knight from *Alexandria* and *Lettowe* rather than from *Cressy* and *Poitiers*, is a problem difficult to resolve, except by supposing, that the slightest services against Infidels were in those days more honourable than the most splendid victories over Christians.

Ver. 48. ferre] i. e. *ferer*, the Comparative of *fer*, far. So Chaucer uses *derre*, for *derer*, the Compar. of *dere*, dear, ver. 1450. "Ther n'as no man that Theseus hath *derre*." *Ferrer* is used at length by Peter of Langtoft; and *Ferrest*, the Superl. below, ver. 496.

Ver. 51. At Alisandre] *Alexandria* in Egypt was won, and immediately after abandoned, in 1365, by Pierre de Lusignan, King of Cyprus. The same Prince, soon after his accession to the throne in 1352, had taken *Satalie*, the antient Attalia; and in another expedition about 1367 he made himself master of the town of *Layas* in Armenia. Compare 11 *Memoire sur les ouvrages de Guillaume de Machaut.* Acad des Ins. t. xx. p. 426, 432, and *Memoire sur la vie de Philippe de Maizières*, t. xvii. p. 493. See also Froissart, v. iii. p. 21. Walsingham mentions the taking of Alexandria, p. 180 and adds; Interfuerunt autem huic captioni cum rege Cypriæ *plures Anglici et Aquitanici*, referentes tam in Angliam quam in Aquitaniam pannos aureos et holosericos, splendoresque gemmarum exoticos, in testimonium tantæ victoriæ.

Ver. 52. he had the bord begonne—in Pruse] *He had been placed at the head of the table*; the usual compliment to extraordinary merit; as the Commentators very properly explain it. When our military men wanted employment, it was usual for them to go and serve in *Pruse*, or Prussia, with the Knights of the Teutonic order, who were in a state of constant warfare with their heathen neighbours in *Lettow* (Lithuania) *Ruse* (Russia), and elsewhere. A pagan *King of Lettow* is mentioned by Walsingham, p. 180, 343.

Ver. 54. reysed] This is properly a German word. Kilian. in v. Reysen, iter facere—et Ger. Militare, facere stipendium. The Editions (except M.) and several MSS. have changed it into *ridden*; which indeed seems to have been used by Chaucer in the same sense, ver. 48.

Ver. 56. In Gernade] The city of Algezir was taken from the Moorish King of *Granada* in 1344. Mariana, L. xvi. c. xi. among other persons of distinction who came to assist at the siege in 1343, names particularly, "*de Inglaterra, con licentia del Rey Eduardo*, los Condes de Arbid, y de Soluzber;" which I suppose we may safely interpret to mean *the Earls of Derby and Salisbury*. Knighton says, that the Earl of *Derby* was there. X *Script.* 2583.

Ver. 57. in Belmarie] I cannot find any country of this name in any authentic Geographical writer. Froissart, v. iv. c. xxiii, reckons it among the kingdoms of Africa; *Thunes, Bougie, Maroch*, Bellemarine, *Tremessen*; and Chaucer, ver. 1772, speaks of it as producing Lions. The battle of *Benamarin*, mentioned in Sir M. Gourney's epitaph, is said by a late author of *Viage de Espanna*, p. 73. n. 1. to have been so called *por haber quedado vencido en ella Albohacen, Rey de Marruecos*, del linage de *Aben Marin*. Perhaps therefore the dominions of that family in Africa might be called abusively *Benamarin*, and by a further corruption *Belmarie*.

Ver. 59 the Grete See] This is generally understood to mean the *Pontus Euxinus*; but I doubt whether the name of *Mare maggiore* was given to that Sea by any other nation beside the Italians. Sir John Mandevile, p. 80, calls that part of the Mediterranean which washes the coast of Palestine, *the grete Sea*; an appellation, which it might possibly have acquired there, to distinguish it from the two inland Seas, as they were improperly styled, the Sea of *Tiberias* and the *Dead* Sea.

In MS. T. it is *the Grekish See*; a reading, to which I should have had no objection, if I had found it confirmed by any better MS. In the middle ages, the Mediterranean Sea, from Sicily to Cyprus, was sometimes called *Mare Græcum*. Hoveden, p. 709. So Bracton speaks of Essoigns, *de ultra et de citra Mare Græcorum*: L. v. Tr. 2. c. 3. *The See of Grece* is used in the same sense by Chaucer himself, ver. 4884.—And in *Isumbras*, fol. 130. b. Tyl he come to *the Grekes See*.

Ver. 60. noble armee] I have printed this as the most intelligible reading, though I am not quite satisfied with it. The MSS. have *arme, aryve*, and *ryver*.

Ver. 65. the lord of Palatie] *Palathia in Anatolia*. Sp The nature of his Lordship may be explained from Frois

sart, v. iii. c. 22. He gives an account there of several *Hauts Barons* in those parts, who kept possession of their lands, paying a tribute to the Turk. He names particularly *le Sire de Sathalie, le Sire de la Palice, et le Sire de Haute-Loge.*

Ver. 84. deliver] *Nimble.* So below, ver. 15422. Deliverly; *Nimbly.* The word is plainly from the Fr. *libre.* The Italians use *svelto*, or *sciolto*, in the same sense.

Ver. 85. in chevachie] *Chevauchée.* Fr. It most properly means an expedition with a small party of Cavalry; but is often used generally for any military expedition. Hollinshed calls it *a rode.*

Ver. 89. Embrouded] *Embroidered*, from the Fr. *Broder*, originally *Border.*

Ver. 91. floyting] *Playing on the flute.* So in H. F. iii. 133.

> "And many a *floite* and litlyng horne,
> And pipes made of grene corne."

The first syllable for a time retained the broad sound of its original. See Du Cange, *Flauta.* Kilian., *Fluyte.* In some copies it is changed to *flowting.*

Ver. 97. nightertale.] *Night-time;* from the Sax. nihtern dæl; *nocturna portio.* Lydgate uses *nightertyme.* Traged. fol. 141. b. 156. b.

Ver. 100. And carf before his fader] The practice of Squiers, of the highest quality, carving at their fathers' tables has been fully illustrated by M. de Ste Palaye, Acad. des Insc. t. xx. p. 604.

Ver. 101. A Yeman hadde he] The late Editions call this character the *Squier's Yeman*, but improperly. The pronoun he relates to the *Knight.* Chaucer would never have given the son an attendant, when the Father had none.

Yeman or *Yeoman*, is an abbreviation of *Yeongeman*, as *Youthe* is of *Yeongthe.* Young men being most usually employed in service, servants have, in many languages, been denominated from the single circumstance of age; as, *puer, garçon*, boy, grome. As a title of service or office, *Yoman* is used in the Stat. 37 E. III. c. 9 and 11, to denote a servant of the next degree above a *garson*, or groom; and at this day, in several departments of the Royal Household, the attendants are distributed into three classes of *Serieants* or *Squiers, Yeomen*, and *Grooms.* In the Household of the Mayor of London, some officers of the rank of *Yeoman* are still, I believe, called *Young men.* See Chamberlain's State of Great Britain.

In the Statute 20 R. II. c. 2. *Yomen* and *Vadletz* are synonymous terms. The Chanones *Yeman*, who is introduced below, ver. 16030, is a common servant. See also ver. 2730. The title of *Yeoman* was given, in a secondary sense, to people of *middling* rank, not in service. So the Miller, ver. 3947, is careful "To saven his *estat* of *yemanrie.*" The appropriation of the word to signify a *small landholder* is more modern, I apprehend.

Ver. 104. peacok arwes] *Arrows with peacock feathers.* See Mr. Warton's illustration of this passage. Hist. of Eng. Po. p. 450.

There is a Patent in Rymer, 15 R. II. *de arte sagittandi per Valettos Regis exercendd.* The *Yeomen*, and all other Servants of the Royal household, of whatever state or office, *under the degree of Yeoman*, are ordered to carry bows and arrows with them, whenever they ride, &c. in the King's train.

Ver. 109. A not-hed] *A head like a nut;* from the hair, probably, being cut short. It has since been called a Roundhead, for the same reason.

Ver. 115. A Cristofre] I do not see the meaning of this ornament. By the Stat. 37 E. III. *Yomen* are forbidden to wear any ornaments of *gold* or *silver.*

Ver. 119. simple and coy] V. Saintré, T. iii. p. 577.

Ver. 120. St. Eloy] In Latin, *Sanctus Eligius.* I have no authority but that of Ed. Urr. for printing this Saint's name at length. In all the MSS. which I have seen, it is abbreviated, St. *Loy*, both in this place and in ver. 7146. The metre will be safe, if *othe* be pronounced as a dissyllable.

Ver. 124. And Frenche she spake] It has been mentioned before, Essay, &c. n. 55, that Chaucer thought but meanly of the English-French spoken in his time. It was proper however that the Prioresse should speak some sort of French; not only as a woman of fashion, a character which she is represented to affect, ver. 139, 140, but as a religious person. The instructions from the Abbot of St. Albans to the Nuns of Sopewell, in 1338, were in the French language. See *Auct. Add. M. Paris*, p. 1171.

Ver. 127. At mete] The following circumstances of behaviour at table are copied from *Rom. de la R.* 14178—14199.

> Et bien se garde qu'elle ne moeille
> Ses doys au brouet jusqu' ès jointes, &c.
> Si sagement port sa bouchèe,
> Que sur son pied goutte n'en chèe
> De souppe, ne de saulse noire.—
> Et doit si bien sa bouche terdre
> Tant qu'el n'y laisse gresse aherdre
> Au moins en la levre desseure.—

Ver. 159. gauded all with grene] *Having the Gaudies green.* Some were of silver gilt. Monast. V. iii. p. 174. Tria paria precularium *del Corall* cum *le gaudeys* argenti deaurata. So in Gower, *Conf. Am.* f. 190.

> A paire of bedes blacke as sable
> She toke and hynge my necke about.
> Upon *the gaudees* all without
> Was wryte of gold, *pur reposer.*

Ver. 163. Another Nonne &c.] See Disc. p. lii.

Ver. 165. a fayre for the maistrie] We should say, *a fair one;* but in Chaucer's time such tautology was not, I suppose, elegant. So below, ver. 189.

> Therfore he was a pricksour, *a right.*

As to the phrase *for the maistrie*, I take it to be derived from the French *pour la maistrie*, which I find, in an old book of Physick, applied to such medicines as we usually call *Sovereign*, excellent above all others. MS. *Bod.* 761. *Secreta h. Samp̄ de Clowburnel*, fol. 17. b. Cirogne bone *pur la maistrie* a briser et a meurer apostemes &c. Medicine *magistrel* pur festre &c. Medicine *pur la maistrie* pur festre &c. And in another treatise in the same MS. *Medulla Cirurgiæ Rolandi*, similar phrases are used in Latin, fol. 77. Pocio bona *pro magisterio* ad vulnera sananda &c. fol. 79. Contra lupum &c. medicamen *magistrale.* In the same sense the Monk is said to be fair, *for the maistrie*, above all others. The phrase is used by Robert of Gloucester, p. 553. An stede he gan prikie wel *vor the maistrie.* The several chemical preparations known by the name of *Magisterium* of Lead, Bismuth &c. I conceive to have originally acquired that name from their being considered at first as *masterly operations.*

Ver. 166. loved venerie] i. e *Hunting.* If the word in Chaucer's time had born any other sense, he would hardly have put it into the mouth of Emilia in ver. 2310. The monks of that age are represented as fond of field-sports. See below, ver. 189—192, and P. P. fol. L. a. Knighton says, that an Abbot of Leicester, who died in 1337, *in venatione leporum inter omnes regni dominos famosissimus et nominatissimus habebatur.* X. Scriptor. p. 2631. He adds indeed, that the Abbot was used to assert, what perhaps may have been partly true, *se non delectasse in hujusmodi frivolis venationibus, nisi solum pro obsequiis dominis regni præstandis, et affabilitate eorum captandd, et gratiâ in suis negotiis adipiscendd.*

Ver. 169. his bridel—Gingeling] See this fashion of hanging bells on bridles, &c. illustrated by Mr. Warton, Hist. of Eng. Po. p. 164. See also below, ver. 14800, 1.

Ver. 177. a pulled hen] See below, ver. 6694.

> "Swiche arrogance n'is not worth an hen."

I do not see much force in the epithet *pulled.* Ca. 1. reads, *pullet.*

Ver. 179. whan he is rekkeles] MS. C reads, *Cloisterles;* to which the only objection is, that, if it had been the true reading, there would have been no occasion to explain

or paraphrase it in ver. 181. The text alluded to is attributed by Gratian, *Decret.* P. ii. Can. xvi. Q. 1. c. viii. to a Pope Eugenius.—*Sicut piscis sine aquâ caret vitâ, ita sine monasterio monachus.* In P. P. according to MS. *Cotton.* Vesp. B. xvi. (for the passage is omitted in the printed editions) a similar saying is quoted from Gregory.

Gregori the grete clerk garte write in bokes
The rewle of alle religioun riytful and obedient
Riyt as fishes in a flod whan hem faileth water
Deien for drowthe whan thei drie liggen
Riyt so religious roten and sterven
That out of covent or cloistre coveiten to dwelle.

As the known senses of *rekkeles*, viz. *careless, negligent*, by no means suit with this passage, I am inclined to suspect that Chaucer possibly wrote *reghelles*, i. e. without rule. *Regol*, from *Regula*, was the Saxon word for a *Rule*, and particularly for a *Monastic Rule*. Hence *Regol-lif*; Regularis seu Monastica vita: *Regol-lage*; Regularium lex: and in the quotation from *Orm*, Essay, &c. n. 52. *an reghel-boc* signifies *the book of Rules*, by which the Augustinian Canons were governed.

Ver. 187. As Austin bit] i. e. biddeth. Chaucer frequently abbreviates the third person Sing. of the Present Tense in this manner. See ver. 976. 983. *Rit* for *Rideth*. ver. 4069. 15686. *Fint* for *Findeth*. ver. 4191. *Rist* for *Riseth*. ver. 5038. 5071, 5. *Stant* for *Standeth*. ver. 7239. *Sit* for *Sitteth*. ver. 7998. *Smit* for *Smiteth*.

Ver. 193. his sleves purfiled.] From the Fr. *Pourfiler*, which properly signifies, *to work upon the edge*. *Pur*, Eng. and *Pour* Fr. are generally corruptions of the Latin *Pro*.

It is not clear what species of fur the *Gris* was, only that it was one of the better sorts. See Du Cange in v. *Griseum*. If it was the same with *Vair*, commonly called *Menever*, i. e. *Menu Vair*, as he supposes, it was probably next in esteem to Ermin. See the Statute 37 E. III. c. 10 and 12. One of Wolsey's ordinances for the reformation of the Augustinian monks in 1519 is directed against the foppery here described. *In manicis* sub nullo modo furruris utantur aut pellibus, nisi prout iis permissum est in Statutis Benedictinis. Monast. v. ii. p. 567.

Ver. 203. His bootes souple] This is part of the description of a smart Abbot, by an anonymous writer of the XIII Century. Ocreas habebat in cruribus, quasi innatæ essent, sine plicâ porrectas. MS. *Bod.* James. n. 6. p. 121.

Ver. 233. farsed] *Stuffed*, from the Fr. *Farcir*.

Ver. 237. Of yeddinges] This word being not understood, has been changed in some copies into *tidinges*, and *weddinges*. It probably means *a kind of Song*, from the Sax. *Geddian*, or *Giddian*, To sing. See the Saxon Boethius, cap. i. 1. ult. where the words *thus singende cuæth* are rendered in the Poetical Version, p. 152. *gyddode thus*. See more instances in Lye's Sax. Dict. The Saxon ȝ passes frequently into *y*.

Ver. 256. *in principio*] This phrase is commonly explained to refer to the Beginning of St. John's Gospel. It may also refer to the Beginning of Genesis. In an old French Romance, *l'histoire des trois Maries*, it seems to signify some passage in the conclusion of the Mass. Acad. des Ins. t. xiii. p. 521,

Moult aise sui quant *audio*
Le Prestre dire *In principio*,
Car la Messe si est finee.

It is not very material in which of these senses it is understood, either here or in ver. 15169.

Ver. 258. His pourchas was, &c.] From the *Rom. de la R.* 12288.

Mieux vault mon pourchas que ma rente.

See R. R. 6838.

Ver. 260. In Love-dayes] A day appointed for the amicable settlement of differences was called *a Love-day*. Bracton, l. v. fol. 369. si ante judicium capiatur *Dies Amoris*.—*Rot. Parl.* 13. H. IV. n. 13. agayn the fourme of *a Love-day* taken bytwen the same parties. The Glossary calls them improperly, *Meetings for pleasure and diversion*. They were meetings for business; though it is probable that the business, when finished, was usually followed by a treat given to the Arbitrators, &c. See the Parl. Roll, quoted above. In P. P. fol. xxvii. Sloth, in the character of a Priest, says,

I can holde *Lovedayes*, and here a Reves rekenynge,
And in Cannon or in Decretals I cannot read a lyne.

Ver. 278. The see were kept] i. e. *guarded*. The old Subsidy of Tonnage and Poundage was given to the King *pur la sauffgarde et* custodie *del mer*. 12 E. IV. c. 3.

Ver. 292. his overest courtepy] *His uppermost short cloke* of coarse cloth. See ver. 6964. and P. P. fol. xxxiii. b. l. ult.

And kyt her copes and *courtepies* hem made.

It is a Teutonic word, from Kort *curtus*, and Pije, *penula coactilis, ex villis crassioribus*. Kilian in vv.

Ver. 300. Yet hadde he] *Hadde* is here to be pronounced as a Dissyllable, the *h* in *he* being considered as a consonant. So below, ver. 388. See also ver. 9859. 11784. 11804. 12532. 12834. in all which instances, and many others, the *e* feminine is to be pronounced before *h*.

304. to scolaie] *to attend school*; from the old French verb, *escoloier*. It is used in the same sense by Lydgate. Traged. fol. 99. So Chaucer uses to *Werreie*, ver. 10324. 14338. and to *Festeye*, ver. 10659, from *Guerroier* and *Festoier*.

Ver. 307. in forme and reverence] *with propriety and modesty*. In the next line, "*full of high sentence*" means only, I apprehend, "*full of high*, or *excellent, sense*."—Mr. Warton will excuse me for suggesting these explanations of this passage in lieu of those which he has given in his *Hist. of Eng. Po.* p. 451. The credit of good letters is concerned, that Chaucer should not be supposed to have made "a pedantic formality," and "a precise sententious style on all subjects," the characteristics of a scholar.

Ver. 322. in suspect] *in suspicion*. See ver. 8781. 12197.

Ver. 331. a seint of silk with barres smale] It appears from our author's translation of R. R. ver. 1103. that *barres* were called *cloux* in French, and were an usual ornament of a girdle. See Mr. Warton's Hist. p. 377. 426. *Clavus* in Latin, from whence the Fr. *Cloux* is derived, seems to have signified not only an outward *border*, but also what we call a *stripe*. Montfaucon, t. iii. part i. ch. vi. A *Bar* in Heraldry is a narrow *stripe*, or *Fascia*. Du Cange, in v. Clavatus, quotes the *Statut. Andegav.* an. 1423. in which the Clergy, and especially the Regulars, are forbid to wear *zonas auro clavatas*.

Ver. 333. A Frankelein] Fortescue de L. L. Ang. c. 29, describes a *Franklain* to be a *Pater familias—magnis ditatus possessionibus*. He is classed *with*, but *after*, the *Miles* and *Armiger*; and is distinguished from the *Libere tenentes* and *Valecti*; though, as it should seem, the only real distinction between him and other *Freeholders* consisted in the largeness of his estate. Spelman, in v. *Franklein*, quotes the following passage from Trivet's French Chronicle: MS. Bibl. R. S. n. 56. *Thomas de Brotherton*, filius Edwardi I. Mareschallus Angliæ, *apres la mort de son pere esposa la fille de* un Francheleyn *apelee Alice*. The Historian did not think it worth his while even to mention the name of the Frankelein.

Ver. 342. Seint Julian] was eminent for providing his votaries with good lodgings and accommodation of all sorts. In the title of his Legende, MS. *Bod.* 1596. fol. 4, he is called "St Julian, the gode herberjour." It ends thus.

Therfore yet to this day thei that over lond wende,
Thei biddeth Seint Julian anon that gode herborw he hem sende,
And Seint Julianes Pater noster ofte seggeth also,
For his fader soule and his moderes, that he hem bring therto.

Of the virtue of Seint Julian's Pater-noster see the Decameron. D. ii. N. 2.

Ver. 344. envyned] *Stored with wine.* Cotgrave has preserved the French word *enviné*, in the same sense. This is the reading of MSS. Ask. 1. 2. and others. The common editions read *viendid.*

Ver. 357. At Sessions] *At the Sessions of the Peace.* The Justices, by the Stat. 34 E. III. c. I. were to be, in each county, *un Seigneur et oversque lui trois ou quatre* des meultz vauez du countee, *ensemblement ove ascuns sages de la ley.* A wealthy Frankelein might perhaps be commissioned under this description; but I know not how he coud be a Knight of the Shire; as they by 46 E. III. were to be CHIVALERS *et* SERJANTZ *des meulx vauez du pais;* unless we suppose, either that the rank of *Serjant* (Esquire) was as undefined as it is now, or that his office of Justice made him an Esquire, within the meaning of the act.

Ver. 359. An anelace] See the Gloss. to M. Paris in v. *Anelacius.* It was a kind of *knife*, or *dagger*, usually worn at the girdle. In that passage of M. Paris, p. 342. where Petrus de Rivallis is mentioned as *gestans anelacium ad lumbare, quod clercium non decebat*, it may be doubted whether the wearing of an anelace simply, or the wearing of it *at the girdle*, was an indecent thing in the clerk. The five city-mechanics, a few lines below, are described as wearing *knives*, and probably at their girdles (see v. 370.) though the latter circumstance is not clearly expressed. In the picture of Chaucer, which is inserted in some copies of Occleve's book *De regimine principis*, he is represented with a *knife* hanging from a button upon his breast. See MSS. *Harl.* 4866. *Cotton.* Otho. A. xviii.

Ver. 359. a gipciere] FR. *Gibeciere*, a purse. The mechanics, ver. 370. have also their *pouches.*

Ver. 361. a countour] This word has been changed in Ed. Urr. upon what authority I know not, to *Coroner.* The MSS. all read *Countour*, or *comptour.* At the same time it is not easy to say what office is meant. I have a notion, that the Foreman of the inquest in the Hundred-court was called a *Countour;* but the Law Glossaries do not take notice of any such sense of the word, and I cannot at present produce any thing stronger in support of it than the following passage of R. G. p. 538. Speaking of an Hundred-court summoned by the Constable of Gloucester Castle, he says, that—

> He hald this hundred mid gret folk and honour,
> And Adam of Arderne was is [his] chef *countour.*

Though this may possibly mean that Adam acted as *accomptant* or *steward* of the court.

Ver. 362. vavasour] The precise import of this word is often as obscure as its original. See Du Cange in v. In this place it should perhaps be understood to mean the whole class of middling Landholders.

Ver. 372. on the deis] This word occurs so frequently in our old authors, that it may be worth the while to endeavour to give a more satisfactory explanation of it than is to be found in the Glossaries. I apprehend that it originally signified the *wooden floor* [*D'ais*, FR. *De assibus*, LAT.] which was laid at the upper end of the hall, as we still see it in College-halls, &c. That part of the room therefore, which was floored with planks, was called the *Dais*, the rest being either the bare ground or at best paved with stone; and being raised above the level of the other parts it was often called *the high Dais.* In royal halls there were more *Dais* than one, each of them probably raised above the other by one or more steps; and that where the King sate was called *the highest Dais.* At a dinner, which Charles V. of France gave to the Emperour Charles IV. in 1377, Christine de Pisan says, Hist. de Ch. V. P. iii. c. 33, cinq *dois* [*dais*] avoit en la sale plains de Princes et de Barons, et autres tables par-tout.—et estoient les *deux grans dois* et les dreçouers fais de barrieres a l'environ.

As the principal table was always placed *upon a Dais*, it began very soon, by a natural abuse of words, to be called itself *a Dais*, and people were said to sit *at the Dais*, instead of *at the table upon the Dais.* It was so in the time of M. Paris. Vit. Abb. p. 1070. Priore prandente ad magnam mensam, quam *Deis* vocamus.

Menage, whose authority seems to have led later antiquaries to interpret *Dais*, a *Canopy*, has evidently confounded *Deis* with *Ders. Ders* and *Derselet*, from *Dorsum*, as he observes, meant properly the hangings at the back of the company, Du Cange, v. DORSALE; but as the same hangings were often drawn over so as to form a kind of canopy over their heads, the whole was called a *Ders.* Christine, P. iii. c. 41. Sus chascun des trois (the Emperour and the Kings of France and Bohemia) avoit un ciel, distincte l'un de l'autre, de drap d'or à fleurs de lis, et pardessus ces trois en avoit un grant, *qui couvroit tout au long de la table, et tout derriere eux pendoit*, et estoit de drap d'or. This last *ciel*, or canopy, "which covered the whole length of the table, and hung down behind the company," was a *Ders.* That it was quite a different thing from a *Deis*, appears from what follows: *A l'autre* dois [dais] *auplus près* (she says) *seoit—le Daulphin* and others. *Et sus le chief du Daulphin avoit un ciel, et puis un autre pardessus qui toute la table couvroit. Dais* here plainly means *a table.* The Dauphin sate *at the second table*, and had a canopy over his own head, and another which covered the whole table. In short, one of Menage's own citations, if properly corrected, will fully establish the distinct senses of these two words. *Ceremon. de Godefroy*, p. 335. Le Roy se vint mettre à table *sur un haut Ders* (read *Deis*) fait et préparé en la grande salle du logis Archiepiscopal, *sous un grand Ders*, le fond du quel estoit tout d'or. He has another citation from Martene, *de Mon. Rit.* l. i. c. xi. p. 109. in which he himself allows, that *Dasium*, the same as *Dais*, must signify *un estrade*, a raised floor. It appears from the same citation, that the ascent to the *Dasium* was by more steps than one.

See below, ver. 2202. 9585. 10373. and Gower, *Conf. Am.* fol. 155. a. Sittende *upon the hie deis.*

Ver. 381. for the nones] "That is, as I conceive, *for the occasion.* This phrase, which was very frequently, though not always very precisely, used by our old writers, I suppose to have been originally a corruption of corrupt Latin. From *pro-nunc*, I suppose, came *for the nunc*, and so *for the nonce;* just as from *ad nunc* came *a-non.* The Spanish *entonces* has been formed in the same manner from *in-tunc.*"

I have repeated this note from the last Edit. of Shakespeare, Vol. 5. p. 239. as I have not found any reason to alter my opinion with respect to the original of this phrase. I will add here a list of several passages in these tales, in which it is used in the same sense. See ver. 525. 547. 3469. 13948. 15339. See also R. G. p. 285.

And he hadde *vor the nones* tweye suerdes by hys syde.

Ver. 383. And poudre marchant] What kind of ingredient this was I cannot tell. Cotgrave mentions a *Pouldre blanche* and a *Pouldre de duc*, which seem both to have been used in Cookery. I must take notice, that the epithet *tart*, in most of the MSS. is annexed to *poudre marchant*, and I rather wish I had left it there, as, for any thing that I know, it may suit that as well as Galingale. [See Brander's roll. n. cxiii. *For to make flaumpayns*—then take powdour of pepper or *els powdour marchant*—and n. cxviii. *Feel in buknade.* Add. note. Ed. 1798.]

Ver. 394. London ale] Whether this was a different sort of ale from that of the provinces, or only better made, I know not; but it appears to have been in request above a century after Chaucer. In the account of the feast of Archbishop Warham in 1504, are the following articles. Lel. Collect. App. P. ii. p. 30.

De cervisia Londini iiii. dol. ——— vi li.
De cervisia Cant. vi. dol. prec. dol. xxv s.
De cervisia Ang. Bere xx. dol. prec. dol. xxiii s. iv d.

So that London ale was higher priced than Kentish by 5s. a barrel.

Ver. 396. Maken mortrewes] Lord Bacon, in his Nat. Hist. i. 48. speaks of "a *Mortress* made with the brawn of capons *stamped* and strained." He joins it with the cullice (*coulis*) of cocks. It seems to have been a rich broth, or soupe, in the preparation of which the flesh was stamped, or beat, in a mortar; from whence it probably derived its

name, *une mortreuse;* though I cannot say that I have ever met with the French word.

Ver. 388. a mormal] A *cancer*, or *gangrene*. So the Gloss. and I believe Chaucer meant no more, by his confining the disease to *the shin*. The original word, *Malum mortuum*, Lat. *Mauxmorz*, Fr. seems to have signified a kind of dead palsy, which took away entirely the use of the legs and feet. Du Cange, in v. Malum mortuum. Jonson, in imitation of this passage, has described a cook with an—"old mortmal on his shin." *Sad Shepherd*. A. ii. S. vi.

Ver. 393. All in a goune of falding] I have added *All*, for the sake of the verse, but perhaps unnecessarily, as some of the MSS. read—

In a goune of falding *unto* t'.e knee.

The reader has been forewarned, Essay, &c. p. xliv., that Chaucer is not always correct in the disposition of his accents.

Ver. 400. Of nice conscience] H. Stephens informs us, that *Nice* was the old French word for *Niais*, one of the synonymes of *Sot. Apol. Herod.* l. i. c. 4. Our author uses it elsewhere in its original sense for *foolish*, ver. 6520.

But say that we ben wise, and nothing *nice*.

Ver. 405. His herberwe, his mone] In ver. 11347. he uses *herberwe* for *the place of the Sun*, which perhaps it may signify here. *Lodemanage* seems to be formed, as the Gloss. observes, by adding a French termination to the Sax. *Ladman*, a Guide, or Pilot. It would have been more English to have said *Lodemanship*, as *Seamanship*, *Horsemanship*, &c. From the same property of *leading*, the North-star, in ver. 2061, is called the *Lodesterre;* and hence also our name of *Loadstone* for the Magnet.

Ver. 418. by his magike naturel] The same practices are alluded to in H. F. iii. 175.

And clerkes eke, which conne well
All this *magyke naturell*,
That craftely do her intentes
To maken *in certayne ascendentes*
Ymages, lo! through which magyke
To maken a man ben hole or seke.

Ver. 433. Old Hippocras] Whoever is curious to know more of the Physicians mentioned in this Catalogue may consult the Account of Authors, &c. in Ed. Urr.—Fabric. Bibl. Med. Æt.—and the Elench. Medicor. Vet. ap. eund. Bibl. Gr. t. xiii. I shall only observe that the names of *Hippocras*, or *Ypocras*, and *Gallien* were used even by the Latin writers of the middle ages for Hippocrates and Galen. See the inscriptions in the Library at St. Albans, *Monast.* t. i. p. 194.

Magnus eram medicus, *Hypocras* sum nomine dictus.
Alter et egregius vocitatus eram *Galienus*.

See below, ver. 12240.

Ver. 459. moist and newe] *Moist* is here used in a peculiar sense, as derived from *musteus;* for according to Nonius, 2. 518. *Mustum*, non solum vinum, verum etiam novellum quiquid est, recte dicitur. So in ver. 17009. *moisty ale* is opposed to *old*.

Ver. 464. as nouthe] the use of *nouthe* for *now*, in this place has so much the appearance of a botch, that it may be proper to observe that the word was in use before Chaucer's time. See R.G. p. 455, 8. In the latter instance it is in the middle of the verse.

Ver. 470. Gat-tothed] Whether we read thus, with the generality of the MSS. or *Cat-tothed*, with MSS. Ask. 1. 2. or *Gap-tothed*, with Ed. Urr. I confess myself equally unable to explain what is meant by this circumstance of description. The Wife uses the phrase when speaking of herself in ver. 6185.

Ver. 528. spiced conscience] This phrase occurs again, ver. 6017. but I do not understand it. See B. and F. Mad Lover, Act. 3.

Ver. 550. the ram] This was the usual prize at wrestling-matches. See below, ver. 13671. and Gamelyn. ver. 343. 555. M. Paris mentions a wrestling-match at Westminster in the year 1222, at which a ram was the prize, p. 265.

Ver. 562. a goliardeis] *Un goliardois*, Fr. *Goliardus*, or *Goliardensis*, Lat. This jovial sect seems to have been so called from Golias, the real or assumed name of a man of wit, toward the end of the xiith Century, who wrote the *Apocalypsis Goliæ*, and other pieces in burlesque Latin Rimes, some of which have been falsely attributed to Walter Map. See Tanner's Bibl. Brit. in v. Golias, and Du Cange in v. Goliardus. There is a poem by one of this sect in MS. *Bod.* 3869. James. 32. which is entitled "Dicta cujusdam Goliardi Anglici," and begins thus:

Omnibus in Galliâ, Anglus Goliardus,
Obediens et humilis, frater non bastardus,
Goliæ discipulus, dolens quod tam tardus,
Mandat salutem fratribus, nomine Richardus.

The last Stanza is this,

Summa salus omnium, filius Mariæ,
Pascat, potet, vestiat pueros Goliæ,
Et conservet socios sanctæ confrariæ
Ad dies usque ultimos Enoch et Elyæ.

In several authors of the xiiith Century, quoted by Du Cange, the *Goliardi* are classed with the *joculatores et buffones*.

Ver. 565. a thomb of gold] If the allusion be, as is most probable, to the old proverb, *Every honest Miller has a thumb of gold*, this passage may mean, that our Miller, notwithstanding his thefts, was *an honest Miller*, i. e. as honest as his brethren.

Ver. 588. sette hir aller cappe] *Aller* is the Genitive Plural of *Alle*, from the Sax. *ealra*. *Hir aller* would be properly rendered in Latin *eorum omnium*. See the Essay, &c. n. 27. *To set a man's cap* is the same as *to make a fool of him*. See ver. 3145.

How that a Clerk hath *set the wrightes cappe*.

Ver. 617. a right good stot] I take *Stot* to be put here for *Stod*, the Saxon word for a *Stallion*. A *stot* signified properly a *Bullock*, as it still does in the North. See the Percy Housh. Book, p. 2. and Note. The passage which Du Cange, in v. Stotrus, has quoted from Maddox, Form. Angl. p. 427. to shew, that *Stottus* signifies *Equus admissarius*, proves rather that it signifies a *Bullock*. John de Nevill leaves to his eldest son several specific legacies "et eciam cc vaccas pro stauro, cc *stottos* et *stirkes*, mm bidentes," &c. *Stirke* is the Saxon name for a *heifer*, so that there can be little doubt that "cc *stottos et stirkes*," should be rendered "cc *bullocks and heifers*."

Ver. 626. cherubinnes face] H. Stephens, *Apol. Herod.* l. i. c. xxx. quotes the same thought from a French Epigram.

Nos grands docteurs *au Cherubin visage*, &c.

Ver. 627. sauseflem] I find this word in an old Fr. book of Physick, which I have quoted before in n. on ver. 165. "Oignement magistrel *pur sauseflem* et pur chescune manere de *roigne*."—*Roigne* signifies any scorbutic eruption. So in the *Thousand notable things*, B. i. 70. "A *sauseflame* or red pimpled face is helped with this medicine following."—Two of the ingredients are *Quicksilver* and *Brimstone*. In another place, B. ii. 20. *Oyle of Tartar* is said "to take away cleane all spots, freckles, and filthy *wheales*." These last, I suppose, are what Chaucer calls *whelkes*. The Original of the word seems to be pointed out in the following passage. Vit. R. ii. a Mon. Evesh. p. 169. "facies alba—interdum *sanguinis flexumate* viciata."

Ver. 648. *Quæstio quid juris*] This kind of Question occurs frequently in Ralph de Hengham. After having stated a case, he adds, *Quid juris?* and then proceeds to give the answer to it. See Heng. Mag. c. xi. Esto autem quod reus nullo modo venerit ad hunc diem, *quid juris?* &c. See also, c. xii.

Ver. 649. a gentil harlot] The name of *Harlot* was anciently given to men as well as women. See below, ver. 4266. 7336. *Herlod*, in Welsh, is said to signify

simply *a young man*, and *Herlodes*, *a young woman*; Richards, Welsh Dict. in v. With us it seems always to have been a disgraceful appellation. In R.R. ver. 6068. *King of Harlots* is Chaucer's translation of *Roy de ribaulx*.

Ver. 664. a *Significavit*] The writ *de excommunicato capiendo*, commonly called a *Significavit*, from the beginning of the writ which is as follows: *Rex Vicecomiti L. salutem.* Significavit *nobis venerabilis pater H. L. Episcopus*, &c. Cod. Jur. Ecc. p. 1054.

Ver. 665. In danger hadde he] i. e. within the reach, or control, of his office. See Hist. Abbat. Pipwell. ap. Monast. Angl. t. i. p. 815. Nec audebant Abbates eidem resistere, quia aut pro denariis aut pro bladis semper fuerunt Abbates *in dangerio* dicti Officialis.

The yonge girles, in the next line, may signify either *the young men* or *the young women*; as girl was formerly an appellation common to both sexes.

Ver. 672. Of Rouncevall] I can hardly think that Chaucer meant to bring his Pardoner from *Roncevaux* in *Navarre*, and yet I cannot find any place of that name in England. An Hospital *Beatæ Mariæ de Rouncyvalle in Charing, London*, is mentioned in the Monast. t. ii. p. 443. and there was a *Runceval-Hall* in Oxford. Stevens, v. ii. p. 262. So that perhaps it was the name of some Fraternity.

Ver. 674. Come hither, love, to me] This, I suppose, was the beginning, or the burthen, of some known song.

Love, is here a dissyllable, as in ver. 260.

In lóve-dáys, ther cóud he móchel helpe.

and in ver. 1627.

Ful sóth is sáyde, that lóve né lordship.

The double rime of *tome*, answering to *Rome*, proves evidently that Rome in this place is to be pronounced as a Dissyllable. We need therefore have no scruple, I think, of pronouncing it in the same manner wherever the metre requires two syllables. See ver. 4562. 4576. 5388. 5568.

A like use may be made of other similar rimes in Chaucer for establishing the pronunciation of the *e* feminine. In ver. 16673. *by me* rimes to *time*, and in Tro. ii. 991. to *time* and *prime*; and accordingly both *time* and *prime* are used in other places as dissyllables. See ver. 7884. 10827—10874. 12596.

In these cases the final monosyllable *me* transfers its accent to the preceding syllable, after the manner of the Greek enclitics, and the final *e* of course becomes a mere *e* feminine.

Ver. 675. bare—a stiff burdoun] *Sang the base.* See ver. 4163. and Du Cange in v. Burdo.

Ver. 684. the new get] *The new fashion.* Gette, or jett, for the MSS. differ, is used in the same sense by Occleve, *de Reg. Princ.* MSS. Bod. 1504. 1786.

Also ther is another *newe gette*,
All foule waste of cloth and excessif.—

Ver. 689. Bret-ful of pardon] This is the reading of all the MSS. and the same expression occurs, in the same sense, in v. 2166, and in F. III. 1033.

Ver. 710. a noble ecclesiast] It appears from hence that the Pardoner was an itinerant *ecclesiastick*, of much the same stamp with *Frate Cipolla* in the Decameron. vi. 10. By the Stat. 22 H. VIII. c. 12. all *proctors and pardoners* going about in any country without sufficient authority are to be treated as vagabonds. Their impositions upon the credulity of the vulgar have been checked by several Councils. See Du Cange, in v. *Quæstiarii* and *Quæstionarius*, under which general names *the venders of indulgences* are included.

Ver. 743. Eke Plato sayeth] This saying of Plato is quoted again ver. 17156. Our author probably took it from Boethius, B. iii. Pr. 12. See also *Rom. de la R.* ver. 7465.

Ver. 761. amonges] I have ventured to lengthen the common reading *among* by a syllable, as the metre requires it, and Chaucer uses the word so lengthened in other places. See ver. 6534.

Ovide, *amonges* other thinges smale—

and ver. 9902.

Amonges other of his honest thinges.

I suspect that the Sax. *gemang* had originally a termination in *an*, *gemangan*, like many other of the Saxon adverbs and prepositions.

Ver. 787. to make it wise] *To make it a matter of wisdom, or deliberation.* So in ver. 3978. 11535. *he made it strange*—signifies—*he made it a matter of difficulty.*

Ver. 792. This is the point] See the Discourse, &c. §. vii.

Ver. 812. and our othes swore] i. e. and *we* swore our othes—and praied him, &c. It is too frequent a practice with our author to omit the governing Pronoun before his verbs. See below, ver. 1757. *And sawe*—for—*And* they *sawe*. Ver. 5042. *and sayn*—for—*and* they *sayn*. Ver. 5054. *and yet lith*—for—*and yet* he *lith*. Ver. 6123. *and blamed himself*—for—*and* he *blamed himself*. Ver. 6398. *And made him*—for—*And* I *made him*.

Ver. 819. In high and lowe] *In*, or *De alto et basso.* Barb. Lat. *Haut et bas.* Fr. were expressions of entire submission on one side, and sovereignty on the other. So P. L. p. 283. speaking of the Pope, says—He salle at his dome set it *lowe and hie*. See Du Cange, in v.

Ver. 827. a litel more than pas] *A pas*, with Chaucer, means, always, I believe, *a foot-pace*. See ver. 2899. And riden forth *a pas*. And ver. 12800. Than thou wolt gon *a pas* not but a mile. See also ver. 16043.—more than trot or *pas*.

Ver. 837. Now draweth cutte] *Draweth* is the second person Plural of the Imperative Mode. See the Essay, &c. n. 32. The ceremony of *drawing cutte* occurs again, ver. 12727, seq. Froissart calls it *tirer à la longue paille*. V. i. c. 294.

Ver. 868. the regne of Feminie] *The kingdom of the Amazons.* So Penthesilea is called by Gower *the Queen of Feminee*. Conf. Am. fol. 75. a 97. b.

Ver. 886. And of the temple] The Editions, and all the MSS. except two, read *tempest*. But the *Thescida* says nothing of any *tempest*. On the contrary it says, that the passage

Tosto fornito fu et senza pene.

I have therefore preferred the reading of MSS. C. I. and HA. as Theseus is described making his offerings, &c. upon his return, in a temple of Pallas. Thes. l. ii.

Ver 907—13] Imitated from the *Thescida*.

Chi son costoro, che a nostri lieti aventi
Cum crini sparti, batendose el pecto,
Di squalor piene in *altri obscuri* vestimenti,
Tutte piangendo, come se in despecto
Havessen la mia gloria e l'altre genti.

The 3rd line, I suspect, should be read thus:

Di squalor piene in *atri* vestimenti.

Obscuri was a gloss for *atri*.

Ver. 911. misboden] *Injured.* So in a Charter of Canute to the Church of St. Paul. Monast. v. iii. p. 304. that nan man—heom *misbeode*.

Ver. 940. wala wa] I shall take the liberty of constantly representing this Interjection in this simple form, though in the MSS. it is written very differently; *walaway*, *weilaway*, *welaway*, &c. from whence the more modern vulgar *weladay*. *Wa* and *la* are both Saxon interjections of grief. The compound *Wala wa* is used in Chr. Saxon. Gibs. p. 191.

Ver. 970. No nere Athenes] *Nere* is used for *Nerre*, and that for *Nerer*, the Comparative of *Ner*. So ver. 1852. ferre ne *nere*; ver. 13450. *nere* and *nere*; ver. 16189. never the *nere*.

Ver. 981. y bete] Probably, *stamped*; that operation being anciently, I suppose, performed by the hammer. See ver. 11948. 11951.

Ver. 1016. And he that other] *He* is inserted for the sake of the metre. But perhaps we should rather read with some of the MSS. And that other *knight* highte Palamon. See the n. on ver. 393.

Highte is a Dissyllable here as in other places; ver. 618. 862. 1730. 3097, et al. It is difficult to determine precisely what part of speech it is; but upon the whole, I am inclined to consider it as a word of a very singular form, a verb active with a passive signification. See ver. 1560. where *I highte* must signify *I am called*, as in the verse preceding *to highte* signifies *to be called*. According to this hypothesis in the present instance and in ver. 618. 862. 1730. where *highte* signifies *was called*, it is put for *highted*; and in ver. 3097, where it signifies *is called*, for *hightetb*.

It should be observed, that the Sax. hatan, *vocare, promittere*, from whence *highte* is derived, is a verb active of the common form; and so is *highte* itself, when it signifies *to promise*. See ver. 6606. 8372.

Ver. 1053. at the sonne uprist] I should have had no objection to the reading of Ed. Urr. *as* the sonne *uprist*, i. e. *upriseth*, if I had found it in any MS. The common reading is supported by Lydgate, Th. fol. 364. a. where *uprist* is used for *uprising*.

Ver. 1060. he blent] This word has various senses in Chaucer, as it is derived from blinnan, cessare; blindan, cæcare; or blendan, miscere. It seems here to be used in a fourth sense, the same in which Shakespeare uses the verb *to blench*, i. e. *to shrink* or *start aside*. Johnson's Dict. in v. Blench. And so perhaps in ver. 3751. and Tro. iii. 1352.

Ver. 1135. to dien in the peine] So in Froissart, v. i. c. 206. Edward III. declares that he will not return "jusques à tant qu'il auroit fin de guerre, ou paix à sa suffisance, ou à son grand honneur: *ou il mourroit en la peine*." See also R. R. 3326.

Ver. 1157. *par amour* I loved hire] i. e. *with love* I loved her. This is a genuine old expression. See Froissart, v. i. c. 196. Il *aima* adonc *par amours*, et depuis espousa, Madame Ysabelle de Juillers.—and Boccace, Decam. x. 7. *per amore amiatz*. So below, ver. 2114. That loveth *par amour*.—From hence *Paramour* or *Paramours*, in one word, was used vulgarly to signify *love*; See ver. 3355. 4390. 13772. and *a mistress*; ver. 6036.

Ver. 1165. the olde Clerkes sawe] The olde Clerk is Boethius, from whose book *de Consolatione* Chaucer has borrowed largely in many places. The passage alluded to is in L. iii. Met. 12.

> Quis legem det amantibus?
> Major lex amor est sibi.

Ver. 1214. o stound] *One moment*. For this reading we are obliged to MS. C. i. Vulg. *or* stound.

Ver. 1254. A dronken man] This is also from Boethius, L. iii. Pr. 2.

Ver. 1281. The pure fetters] The *very* Fetters. So in the *Duch.* ver. 583. The *pure* deth. The Greeks used καθαρος in the same sense (Τιμων καθαρος. A *very* Timon: Aristoph. Opv. 1548.); and the Latins *purus putus*. See Froissart, v. ii. c. 104. *pur* Anglois de courage.

Ver. 1346. exiled on his hed] So in Froissart, v. i. c. 241. orders were given *que nul* sur sa teste *ne s'advançast d'aller devant*. In v. ii. c. 41. he uses indifferently *sur la teste* and *sur peine de la teste*.

Ver. 1378. Beforne his hed in his celle] This is the reading of MS. E. The MSS. C. i. and HA. read, Beforn his *owen* celle—and perhaps their authority ought to have been followed in the text.

Ver. 1430. Philostrate] In the *Theseida* Arcite takes the name of *Penthéo*. See the Discourse, &c. p. liv. The name of Philostrate might be suggested to Chaucer, either by Boccace's poem entitled *Philostrato*, or by the Decameron, in which one of the characters is so called. In the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, of which the principal subject is plainly taken from this Tale, a Philostrate is also introduced as a favourite servant of Theseus, and master of his sports.

Ver. 1479. That nedes cost] The sense of this passage as it stands in the MSS. is so obscure, that I am inclined to adopt the alteration proposed in Gl. Urr. v. Nede. That nedes cast he moste himselven hide. i. e. That he must needs *cast*, or contrive, to hide himself. But I find the same expression in L. W. 2686.

> "Or *nedes coste* this thing mote have an ende."

Ver. 1524. feld hath eyen] An old Monkish verse to this effect is quoted in MS. *Bod.* James. n. 6. p. 161. Campus habet lumen, et habet nemus auris acumen.

Ver. 1537. Now shineth it, and now] I have printed this line so upon the credit of Edit. M. which professes to follow MSS. though perhaps we might safely read with MS. A. Now *itte* shineth, now—*Itte* may have been a dissyllable formerly as well as *atte*.

Ver. 1568. That shapen was, &c.] See T. iii. 734, 5. 7797.

Ver. 1628. his thankes] *With his good will*. See also ver. 2109. 5854. and ver. 2116. hir thankes; *with their good will*. So in the Saxon Chron. p. 243. sume *here thankes*, and sume *here unthankes*; aliqui *libenter* et aliqui *ingratis*.

Ver. 1644. And breking] The MSS. all read, *breketh*. But it is more likely, I think, that the first transcriber should have made a mistake in that word, than that Chaucer should have offended so unnecessarily against grammar.

Ver. 1658. In his fighting were as] *As* has been inserted for the sake of the metre, but I am not satisfied with it. Perhaps we should read *fightinge*, and pronounce the final *e*. In the Saxon, Verbals of this form are said to terminate in *ange, inge, onge, unge*. Hickes, Gr. AS. c. 3. xvii.

Ver. 1670. l.] So in the *Theseida*, l. v.

> Ma come nui vegian venir in hora
> Cossa che in mille anni non aviene.

Ver. 1715. As though it were] The best MSS. read—As it were in a *listes*—which perhaps is right. See before, ver. 1014. *on armes*.—And Froissart, v. i. c. 153. en *unes lices*, qui pour celle cause furent faites.

In the preceding line *other* is the old expression for *or*.

Ver. 1749. Mars the rede] So below, ver. 1971. Boccace has given Mars the same epithet in the opening of his Theseida.

> — o rubicondo Marte.

Ver. 1817. And therfore] Imitated from the Theseida, l. v.

> Ma pero che gia inamorato fui
> E per amor sovente folegial,
> M'e caro molto il perdonare altrui.

Ver. 1861. Sle his contrary] The terms in the Theseida are simply—

> Chi l'altra parte caccera di fuore
> Per forza d'arme, marito li fia.

Ver. 1900. Arsmetrike] So Arithmetike was commonly called in our ancient language. See below, ver. 7804. and *The seven Sages of Rome*. MS. *Cotton*. Galba. E. ix.

> Geometrie and *ars metrike*
> Fisik and also Retorike.

Ver. 1915. Hath Theseus don wrought] This should rather be *don work*. The Participle of the Past Time is put improperly for the Infinitive Mode. But the same inaccuracy occurs again in ver. 4591.

> These marchants han don fraught hir shippes newe.

Ver. 1920. the temple of Venus] In the description of this temple Chaucer has taken very little from Boccace, as he had already inserted a very close imitation of this part of the Theseida in his *Assemblee of Foules*, from ver. 183 to ver. 287. If that Poem alludes, as I suspect, to the intended marriage between John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster, which took place in 1359, it will follow that

the Poem of Palamon and Arcite must have been composed after that period.

Ver. 1932. And hadde a cuckow] *Hadde* is inserted upon the authority of Ed. M. I do not recollect to have found it in any MS.

Ver. 1942. The porter Idelnesse] In the Ass. of F. ver. 261. *Richesse* is the Porter of Venus. But Idelnesse, *Dame Oyseuse*, is the Porter of the *Jardin de Deduit*. Rom. de la R. 645.

Ver. 1977. I shall throw together a few lines of the *Theseida*, which Chaucer has plainly copied in this description.

> Ne v'era bestia ancora ne pastore—
> Cerri—Nodosi, aspri, rigidi e vetusti—
> E le porte eran de eterno adamante
> Ferrato d'ogni parte tutte quante.

Ver. 1999. The cruel ire] From the Theseida.

> Vide vi le ire rosse come focho
> E la paura palida in quel locho.

The pikepurse, I am sorry to say, is Chaucer's own.

Ver. 2002. The shepen] *The stable;* from the Sax. scypen, which signifies the same thing. The translator of Bede renders *ad stabula jumentorum*—to neata scypene. B. iv. c. 24.

Ver. 2014. outhees] *Outcry;* from *Hutesium*, a term well known in our Law. This line has usually been printed—

> Armed complaint *on theft* and fiers *corage*.

Ver. 2019. the shippes hoppesteres] It is needless to trouble the reader with the various readings and interpretations of this passage. *To hoppe*, in Saxon signified exactly the same as *to dance*, though with us it has acquired a ludicrous sense; and the termination *stre*, or *ster*, was used to denote a female, like *trix* in Latin. As therefore a *female* baker was called a *bakester*, a *female* brewer a *brewester*, a *female* webbe, or weaver, a *webbester*, so, I conceive, a *female* hopper, or dancer, was called an *hoppester*. It is well known that a ship, in most languages, is considered as a female.

Though the idea of a ship *dancing on the waves* be not an unpoetical one, the adjunct *hoppesteres* does not seem so proper in this place as the *bellatrici* of the Theseida, l. vii.

> Vedevi ancor le navi bellatrici,
> In voti carri e li volti guastati.

In another respect Chaucer has improved upon his original, by representing the ships *on fire*. It should be observed that the principal circumstances in Boccace's description of this temple of Mars are copied from Statius, l. vii.

Ver. 2020. The hunte] *The huntsman*, from the Sax. hunta. See before, ver. 1680. and below, ver. 2630. I know not what to think of the two following lines. Was Chaucer serious, or did he mean, in this and some other similar passages, to ridicule the minute and often incongruous descriptions of the old Romancers? The lines are in all the MSS.

Ver. 2027. Th' armerer and the bowyer] The Editions and all the MSS. except Dr. Askew's, read—The barbour and the bocher. I was glad to avail myself of the authority of those two MSS. to insert *Th' armerer* instead of *The barbour*, and in consequence of that emendation I have ventured, from conjecture only, to substitute *the bowyer* for *the bocher*.

Ver. 2031. With thilke sharpe swerd] *Thilke* is from conjecture only. The MSS. read—*the*. *Sharpe* is a Dissyllable in other places. See ver. 2028. 2605. 9033.

In the next line I have also put *Yhanging* instead of *Hanging*.

Ver. 2123. Armed they weren] This is upon the authority of Ed. M. The MSS. read—Armed were they—.

Ver. 2150. alauns] *Alano* is the Spanish name of a species of Dog, which the Dictionaries call *a Mastiff*. Sir J. Bouchier's translation of Froissart, B. iv. c. 24. "foure coursers and two *Allans of Spayne*, fayre and good."

Ver. 2154. *Torettes*] Rather, *toretes*, with the MSS. from the Fr. *Touret*, which is explained by Cotgrave to signify, among other things, "*the little ring*, by which a Hawkes *Lune*, or *Leash*, is fastened unto the Jesses." Mr. Warton has shewn, by several quotations, that *toretes* were affixed to the collars of dogs, for a similar purpose. Hist. of Eng. Po. p. 364. Our author says, that "the Ringe (of the Astrolabe) renneth in a manner of a *turet*." Tr. of Ast. fol. 291. b.

Ver. 2171. fraknes] The Saxon word for what we call *freckles*.

Ver. 2206. What haukes] He alludes to the following description in the *Theseida*, l. vii.

> L'aula grande d'alti cavalieri
> Tutta era piena, e di diverse gente.
> Quivi aveva zugulari e ministrieri
> Di diversi atti copiosamente,
> Zilfalchi, astori, falconi, e sparavieri,
> Brachi, livreri, e mastin veramente,
> Su per le stanze e in terra a giacere,
> Assai a quor zentili belli a vedere.

Ver. 2219. And in hire houre] I cannot better illustrate Chaucer's Astrology than by a quotation from the old *Kalendrier de Bergiers*, Edit. 1500. Sign. K. ii. b. Qui veult savoir comme bergiers scevent quel planete regne chascune heure du jour et de la nuit, doit savoir la planete du jour qui veult s'enquerir; et la premiere heure temporelle du soleil levant ce jour est pour celluy planete. la seconde heure est pour la planete ensuivant. et la tierce pour l'autre, &c. in the following order, viz. Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sol, Venus, Mercury, Luna. To apply this doctrine to the present case. The first hour of the Sunday, reckoning from sun-rise, belonged to the Sun, the Planet of the day; the second to Venus, the third to Mercury, &c. and continuing this method of allotment, we shall find that the twenty-second hour also belonged to the Sun, and the twenty-third to Venus; so that the hour of Venus really was, as Chaucer says, two houres before sun-rise of the following day.

Accordingly, we are told in ver. 2273. that the third hour after Palamon set out for the temple of Venus, the Sun rose, and Emelie began to go to the temple of Diane. It is not said, that this was the hour of Diane, or the Moon, but it really was; for, as we have just seen, the twenty-third hour of Sunday belonging to Venus, the twenty-fourth must be given to Mercury, and the first hour of Monday falls in course to the Moon, the presiding Planet of that day.

After this Arcite is described as walking to the temple of Mars, ver. 2369. in *the nexte houre of Mars*, that is, the *fourth* hour of the day. It is necessary to take these words together, for *the nexte houre*, singly, would signify the *second* hour of the day; but that, according to the rule of rotation mentioned above, belonged to Saturn, as the *third* did to Jupiter. The *fourth* was *the nexte houre of Mars*, that occurred after the hour last named.

Ver. 2223. Fayrest of fayre] So Palamon in the *Theseida*.

> O bella dea, del bon Vulcan sposa,
> Per cui se allegra il monte Citherone,
> Dee i ti priego, che mi sii pietosa,
> Per quello amore che portasti ad Adone.

And again. See below, ver. 2240.

> Io non te chegio in arme aver victoria—
> Io cercho sola Emilia, la qual poi
> Donarmi, Dea, se donar la mi voi.
> Il modo trova tu, ch'io non ne curo
> O ch'io sia vinto, o ch'io sia vincitore.

Ver. 2273. The thridde hour inequal] In the Astrological system, the day, from sun-rise to sun-set, and the night, from sun-set to sun-rise, being each divided into XII hours, it is plain, that the hours of the day and night were never equal, except just at the Equinoxes. The hours attributed to the Planets were of this *unequal* sort. See *Kalendrier de Berg.* loc. cit. and our author's treatise on the Astrolabe.

Ver. 2283. Fu mondo il tempio e *di bei drapi ornato.* Thes. l. vii.

Ver. 2291. Hire bright here] So Emilia is described in Thes. l. xii.

> Dicho che i suo crin parevan d'oro,
> Non con trezza restretti, ma soluti
> E petinati.

Ver. 2292. A coroune] Corona di querzia cereale. Thes. l. vii.

Ver. 2358. Shal thee declaren] This is improper, as the fires *have* already *declared* the event of the combat. In the Original, as I remember, the appearance of Diana is prior to the Omen.

Ver. 2372. payen] This French word is constantly used in the best MSS. instead of *pagan.*

Ver. 2375. O stronge god] The prayer of Arcite in the *Theseida* begins in the same manner.

> A forte dio, che ne i regni nivosi
> Bistonii servi le tue sacre case—
> Se per alto volere la mia etate
> E le mie forze meritan, che io
> De i toi sia detto, per quella pietate,
> Ch'ebbe Neptuno, alor che con disio
> Di Citharea *usavi* la beltate,
> Rinchiuso da Vulcan, ad ogni idio
> Facto palese, humilmente te priego,
> Che a li miei prieghi tu non fazi niego.
> Io son come tu vidi giovinetto, &c.

Ver. 2404. Than helpe me] So in the *Theseida.*

> Dunque me ajuta per lo santo focho,
> Che te arse gia, si come me arde hora.
> — — — — — —
> I templi tuoi eterni soneranno
> De l'armi del mio vinto compagnone,
> Et ancora le mie vi penderano—
> Eterni fochi sempre vi arderano,
> E la barboa [f. barba] e i mei con [f. crin] che offensione
> Di ferro non sentiron te improntito.

Ver. 2451. *out-rede*] *Out-wit: surpass in counsel.* The sense of this word has been most ridiculously mistaken by Dryden.

> For this advantage age from youth has won,
> As not to be *out-ridden*, though out-run.

Ver. 2469. Min ben also the maladies colde] I apprehend that *maladies* in this verse is to be pronounced as of four syllables.

> Min ben alsó the máladies cólde.

See below, ver. 2495.

> Ther wás in th'hóstelries áll abóute.

And ver. 2591.

> Ther n'ére swiche cómpagnies néver twéy.

However, if any one should prefer a hobbling line with another syllable in it, he may read with the best MSS. *And* min ben also, &c.

Ver. 2506. Gniding of sheldes] *Rubbing*, from the Sax. Gnidan; *fricare.* I have not scrupled to insert this reading in the text from a single MS. (NC.) and that one of the least authority. Indeed both Caxton's Editions support it, for they read *gnydyng*; and *n* in many MSS. is undistinguishable from *u.* The other readings are, *Gynggynge, Gigging, Grigging, Girding, Gyding, Gryding.*

Ver. 2513. Pipes, trompes] Theseida, l. ii.

> A una hora trombe, nachare, e tamburi
> Sonaron forte.—

See Du Cange, in v. Nacara, who describes it to be a kind of brazen drum used in the cavalry.

Ver. 2516. Here three] So in the Theseida.

> Qui tre, la quatro, e qui sei adunati,
> Tra lor mostrando diverse ragione.

Ver. 2527. Held yet the chambre] So the Theseida.

> Anchor le riche camere tenea
> Del suo palagio.

Ver. 2535. an o] It may be doubted, whether this be an abbreviation of *Oyez*, or whether the Interjection *Ho* were used to command a cessation of noise, as well as of fighting, &c. For the latter use, see v. 1708. 2658. and Holinshed, p. 495. The duke of Norfolke was not fullie set forward, when the King cast down his warder, and the Heraldes cried, Ho, ho.

Ver. 2552. himself to were] *To defend.* It is a Saxon word. See Chr. Sax. Gibs. p. 57. hine werede. *se defendit.* —and p. 148. See also Lydg. Troy. B. iv.

> That shelde ne plate might his body *were.*

Ver. 2559. ylast] The prepositive *y* is an addition of my own, for the sake of the metre; but perhaps we might read "No longer shal the tourneyinge last." See the n. on ver. 1656. I should observe that some MSS. read *tournament*, and MS. D. *tourmentenge*, which may lead us to suspect that Chaucer possibly wrote, *tourneymenting.*

Ver. 2563. The vois of the peple] So the Theseida.

> Di nobili e del populo il romore
> Tocho le stelle, si fu alto e forte,
> Li dei, dicendo, servi tal signore
> Che de gli amici suoi fugie la morte.

Ver. 2608. the herte spone] This part of the human body is not mentioned in any Dictionary, that I have seen. The following passage of Jonson, *Sad Shepherd*, A. I. S. vi. would incline one to suspect, that it means the concave part of the breast, where the lower ribs unite with the *cartilago ensiformis.*

> —He that undoes *him*, (the deer,)
> Doth cleave the *brisket bone*, upon the *spoon*
> Of which a little gristle grows—

The Gloss. supposes *spone*, to be a Participle, signifying *Thrust, driven, push't*; from the It. *Spingere.*

Ver. 2617. He foineth on his foo] I have ventured to substitute *foo* instead of *foot*, or *feet*, the readings of the MSS. *Foot* seems to have been originally introduced by a copyist from the preceding line, and to have been afterwards altered to *feet*, in order to make some sense.

Ver. 2628. the vale of Galaphey] This word is variously written; *Colaphey, Galgaphey, Galapey.* There was a town called *Galapha*, in *Mauritania, Tingitana*, upon the river *Malva* (Cellar. Geog. Ant. v. ii. p. 935.) which perhaps may have given name to the vale here meant. For *Belmarie*, ver. 2632, see the note on ver. 57.

Ver. 2673. The trompoures] the *trumpeters.* So the best MSS. If the learned Editor of *Ancient Scottish Poems* had found this word in this sense in his copy of Chaucer, he would not, I apprehend, have looked any further for an explanation of it in *The Dance*, by Dunbar, St. 2. v. 10. p. 27.

Ver. 2677. Whiche a miracle] It is scarce necessary to observe that *which*, in our ancient language, was often used for *who* and *what.* It is used for *what* here, and again, ver. 5621. 6875.

Ver. 2685. And was all his in chere, as his in herte] I have patched up this verse, as well as I coud, out of the different copies. There is no authority, as I recollect, for the first *in*, except Ca. 2. but it seems absolutely necessary: and all the copies read—*as* in his *herte*—which, I think, is evidently wrong.

Ver. 2686. a fury] Most of the copies have *a fire.* MS. A. reads *a fuyr*, from which I have made the present reading, as in the Theseida it is *Herinis*, i. e. *Erinnys*, one of the Furies.

Ver. 2698. corven] *Cut* out of his harness. I suppose to save the time and trouble of regularly disarming him, the laces, &c. were cut.

Ver. 2715. And fermacies] *Pharmacies.* I have added the *and*, which seems as necessary to the sense as to the metre.

Ver. 2735. The gree] *The prize; the honour of the day.* So in P. P. fol. 98.

> *The gre* yet hath he gotten, for al his grete wound.

And in that curious old Ballad, *The turnament of Tottenham*. ver. 91. Ancient Poetry, v. ii

[To] which of all the bachelery granted is *the gree*.

And again, ver. 186.

They gathered Perkin about on every side,
And grant him there *the gree*, the more was his pride.

It was necessary to vindicate this old phrase, as the Editions have discarded it for *They grete*.

Ver. 2740. a journee] *A day's work*, or *way*. Fr. To make this still clearer, the Editions, in general, read—*a dayes journey*—and spoil the verse.

Ver. 2748. bouke] *The trunk of the body*, probably; from the Sax. Buce, *venter*.

Ver. 2802. overnome] *Overtaken*; from overniman, Sax.

Ver. 2803. And yet] So in the Theseida, l. x.

E anchor ne le brazza era perduta
La vital forza, sol ne lo intelletto
E nel core era ancora sostenuta
La pocha vita.—

Ver. 2813. Therfore I stint] This is apparently a fling at Boccace's pompous description of the passage of Arcite's soul to heaven. Thes. l. xi. It should be observed however, that our author had already made use of the same description in his Troilus, v. 1806, seq. It is not in the Philostrato.

Ver. 2817. ther Mars his soul gie] The force of *ther* in this passage will best appear by a collation of other similar passages. See particularly ver. 5022. 7143. 9182.

Ver. 2856. He casteth] I have added *He*, to complete the verse. The use of pronouns redundantly is common in Chaucer.

Ver. 2862. in that selve grove] In the *Theseida*, Arcita is buried—nel bosco, ove rancuna

Aver sovente soleva de amore.

Ver. 2866. Of funeral] *Of* is a conjectural supplement. Or the verse may be, perhaps better, completed, by taking in the word *fully* from MS. NC. and Ed. Ca. 2.—in which th' office

Funeral he might all *fully* accomplice.

Ver. 2872. And after this] The second *this* is from conjecture only. Some MSS. read—And after this Theseus hath *Ysent*—which perhaps is right.

Ver. 2879. bare the visage] If this expression were in Milton, the Criticks would not fail to call it *an elegant Græcism*. In Chaucer we can only hope that it may be allowed to be *an elegant Anglicism*. Froissart says, that the corpse of our Edward III. was carried "*tout au long de la cité de Londres*, à viaire decouvert, *jusques à Westmonstier*." V. i. c. 326.

Ver. 2885. With flotery berd] Thes. l. xi.

Con rabuffata braza [or, barba] e tristo crine
E polveroso.—

Flotery seems literally to mean *floting*; as hair dishevelled (*rabbuffata*) may be said to flote upon the air. *Ruggy* is *rough*.

Ver. 2887. And passing over] According to this reading, the sense is plain, that Palamon was the reufullest, &c. *passing over*, or *excepting*, Emelie. But all the MSS. that I have seen, read—*other*. If we adhere to that, we must dispose the Parenthesis thus:

And (passing other of weping) Emelie
The reufullest, &c.—

and the sense will be, that with Palamon came also Emelie (passing others *of*, or *in* weping) the reufullest, &c. But such a construction would be very harsh and unlike Chaucer's usual facility; and therefore I rather believe we should read—*over*.—with Ed. Urr.

Ver. 2897. his bow Turkeis] So in the *Rom. de la R.* Love is said to have *deux arcs Turquois*, ver. 924.

Ver. 2904. the maister streto] *The principal* street. Le *souverain* carrefour. Froissart, v. iv. c. 28.

Ver. 2960. the liche-wake] The custom of *watching* with *dead bodies* (lice. Sax.) is probably very ancient in this country. It was abused, as other Wakes and Vigils were. See Du Cange, in v. Vigilia. *In vigiliis circa corpora mortuorum* vetantur *choreæ et cantilenæ, seculares ludi et alii turpes et fatui*. Synod. Wigorn. an. 1240. c. 5. Chaucer seems to have confounded the Wake-plays, as they were called, of his own time with the Funeral-games of the Antients. So in Troilus, v. 303. Troilus says to Pandarus,

But of the fire and flambe funeral
In which my body brennen shall to glede,
And of the *feste* and *playes palestral*
At my *vigile* I pray thee take good hede.

Ver. 2964. in no disjoint] *With no disadvantage*. So ver. 13341. in swiche disjoint; *at such disadvantage*.

Ver. 2993. that fayre chaine of love] Our author's philosophy is borrowed, as it is usually, from Boethius. L. ii. Met. 8.

Hanc rerum seriem ligat,
Terras ac pelagus regens,
Et cælo imperitans, amor.

See also, for what follows, L. iv. Pr. 6.

Ver. 3019. Lo the oke] So in the *Theseida*.

Li querci, che anno si lungo nutrimento
E tanta vita quanto noi vedemo,
Anno pur alcun tempo finimento.
Le dure pietre ancor &c.

Ver. 3043. Than is it wisdom] From the *Theseida*.

E pero fare de la necessitate
Virtu, quando bisogna, e sapientia,
E il contrario e chiara vanitate.

Ver. 3056. his vassallage] *Valour, prowess*. Froissart, v. i. c. 271. à grand honneur et vassellage. See Du Cange, in v. Vassaticum.

Ver. 3078. With all th' avys] So the Statute 5 H. IV. is said in the Preamble to be made—*de l' advis* et assent des Seignurs, &c. The same form is used in most of the Acts of that reign.

Ver. 3091. oweth] By writing this word so, according to some MSS. we preserve a proper distinction between *oweth*, the third person Sing. of the Present Tense, and *ought*, which was formerly only used in the Past Tense.

Ver. 3109. Thus endeth Palamon] Before I quit this tale, I will just take notice that the same subject has been treated twice in French verse, many years since Chaucer's time, by two Ladies. The one, *Anne de Graville*, is said by Du Verdier (*Bibl.* p. 42.) to have translated *de viell langage et prose Le beau Romant des deux amants Palamon et Arcita*. It began thus:

Victorieux en armes et amours
Fut Theseus, apres que plusieurs jours
Eut sejourné en l'Amazone terre,
Ou Cupido et Mars luy firent guerre,
Les quels vainquit et Hypolite aussi—

The other, *Jeanne de la Fontaine*, is mentioned by La Croix du Maine; and it was most probably her poem, that *Johannes Secundus* has celebrated, l. iii. Eleg. xv. as he appears to have written her Epitaph and a *Nænia* upon her death. V. *Lib. Funer.*—inter Opp. Secund.

In the New Edit. of *Les Bibliotheques Françoises*, the Poem of *Anne de Graville* is said to be still preserved in the Royal Library at Paris; and I find from a note of *M. de la Monnoye* in that Edit. that he was well apprized of our Chaucer's having borrowed this tale from the Theseida.

Ver. 3126. in Pilates vois] In such a voice as Pilate was used to speak with in the Mysteries. Pilate, being an odious character, was probably represented as speaking with a harsh, disagreeable voice.

Ver. 3156. After this verse, the two following are found in so many MSS. that perhaps they ought to have been inserted in the text.

And ever a thousand good ageins on badde:
That knowest thou wel, but if thou be madde.

Ver. 3172. as deme not] This phrase has occurred before: ver. 2304. As kepe me. Ver. 2319. As sende. I once thought that *as* in these cases was used elliptically for *do so much as*; but then the following verb must have been in the infinitive mood, whereas it is often in the imperative. See ver. 5773. As taketh. Ver. 6631. As doth. Ver. 13352. As beth. I am therefore rather inclined to understand it in the sense of *so*, according to its original etymology. *As* is an abbreviation of *als*, and that of *al swa*; *sic omnino*. See ver. 5481. 5778. 7007.

Ver. 3199. hendy Nicholas] *Hendy*, or *Hende*, as it was more commonly written, signified, *courteous*. So ver. 6363.

—A, sire, ye shuld ben hende,
And curteis, as a man of youre estat.

Ver. 3210. augrim-stones] *Augrim* is a corruption of *Algorithm*, the Arabian term for Numeration. *Augrim-stones* therefore were the *pebbles*, or *counters*, which were anciently used in Numeration.

Ver. 3217. the kinges note] What this *note*, or *tune*, was I must leave to be explained by the Musical Antiquaries. *Angelus ad virginem*, I suppose, was *Ave Maria*, &c.

Ver. 3223. Of eightene yere] The words—I gesse—are not in the MSS. MS. A. reads, *seventene*; which perhaps may be right if *seventene* be pronounced as of four syllables. Ask. 1 and 2. would remove all difficulties by reading, *Of eightene yere* this woman *was of age*.

Ver. 3227. He knew not Caton] The calling of this author *Caton* shews, that he was more studied in French than in Latin. See below, ver. 9251. 14946. 16155. Who he was, or of what age, is uncertain: but his authority, four or five hundred years ago, seems to have been as great as if he had really been the famous Censor of Rome. However, the maxim here alluded to is not properly one of Cato's; but I find it in a kind of Supplement to the Moral Distichs, entitled *Facetus* int. Auctores octo morales. Lugd. 1538. cap. iii.

Duc tibi prole parem sponsam moresque venustam,
Si cum pace velis vitam deducere justam.

The same treatise, or at least one with the same beginning and on the same subject, is mentioned in the Cat. MSS. Coll. Trin. Dublin. n. 275. under the title of *Urbanus*. It is there attributed to Daniel *Ecclesiensis* (Churche), who lived about the year 1180. See Bale. Cent. iii. 17. and Fabric. Bib. Med. Æt. in v.

Ver. 3237. many a *gore*] This word is used again in ver. 13719. I do not understand it in either place.

Ver. 3247. blisful for to see] The better MSS. read—*on* to see,—which I believe is right. See L. W. 2914. Lydg. Troy, B. iii. ch. xxii.

His brother *Troylus*, so goodly *on* to see—

and Gower, *Conf. Am.* fol. 17. b.

Tho was she fouler *unto* [r. *on to*] *se*.

Ver. 3248. the newe perjenete tree] Some of the MSS. read, *perjonette*, as if the word were derived from the Ital. *pero giovanetto*, rather than from the Fr. *poire*, or *pere, jeunette*. In either case it signifies *a young pear*.

Ver. 3251. perled with latoun] That is, I believe, *ornamented with latoun in the shape of pearls*. It is probable that some very elegant purses were embroidered with real pearls.

Ver. 3254. So gay a *popelot*] This word may either be considered as a diminutive from *Poupée*, a Puppet; or as a corruption of *Papillot*, a young butterfly.

Ver. 3263. a primerole] Old Fr. for a *Primrose*. It is used by Gower. *Conf. Am.* fol. 148.

Ibid. a piggesnie] The Romans used *oculus* as a term of endearment, and perhaps *piggesnie*, in vulgar language, only means *ocellus*; the eyes of that animal being remarkably small. The word occurs again in the *Remedie of Love*, ver. 257. though I do not believe that to be a work of Chaucer.

Ver. 3266. harow] It would much exceed the limits of these notes to recite the several opinions concerning the original of this word. The curious reader may consult Du Cange in v. and Hickes, Gr. Fr. Theot. p. 96. I rather believe it to have been derived from Har, *altus*, and Op, *clamor*, two Islandic words, which were probably once common to all the Scandinavian nations. See Gudmund. And. Lex. Island. by Resenius. Hafn. 1683. In support of this opinion, it may be observed, that the very word *Harocp*, or *Harop*, was used by some of the inhabitants of the Low-countries in the same sense in which *Harou* was by the Normans. Du Cange, in v. Harop.

Ver. 3308. Of Cristes] *Of* is added from conjecture only.

Ver. 3318. With Poules windows] Perhaps this means, that his shoes were cut in squares like panes of glass. Bale mentions *fenestratos calceos* as making part of the habit of the Franciscans. Cent. iv. 27. and 91. They also occur in the Cistercian Statutes an. 1529. and the Monks are forbidden to wear them. Du Cange in v. Calcei fenestrati.

Ver. 3321. of a light waget] Or, *Watchet*. Skinner explains *Watchet* to mean *a colour*, a whitish blue; but in this place it seems rather to mean some kind of *cloth*; denominated, perhaps, from the town of *Watchet*, in Somersetshire. Instead of *light*, some MSS. read *fin*; and MS. A. *whit*. This last epithet would be quite inconsistent with Skinner's explanation.

Ver. 3329. the scole of Oxenforde] The school of Oxford seems to have been in much the same estimation for its dancing, as that of Stratford for its French. See before, ver. 125. *Oxenforde* is a Quadrisyllable. *Oxnaforda*. Sax.

Ver. 3336. tapstere] A *female* keeper of a tap or tavern. See n. on ver. 2019. and the Prol. to the continuation of the C. T. Ed. Urr. p. 594.

Ver. 3337. squaimous] *Squeamish*; but I know not how to make that sense agree with what follows. Robert of Brunne (in his translation of *Manuel des Pechées*, MS. *Bod.* 2078. fol. 46.) writes this word, *esquaimous*; which is nearer to its original, *exquamiare*, a corruption of *excambiare*.

Ver. 3358. a shot window] That is, I suppose, a window that was *shut*. It might perhaps be better to write this word, with some of the MSS. *shet*, or *shette*; as Chaucer does in other places, ver. 16605. 16610. MS. A. reads *shop*; and HA. *short*.

Ver. 3361, 2.] These two lines, containing Absolon's Song, were meant, I apprehend, to be broken into four short verses, which will rime together very harmoniously, if the accent be laid upon the last of *ladý*, as it often is in such compositions.

Ver. 3382. And som for strokes] In the margin of MS. C. 1. is the following note. "Ovid. Ictibus agrestis &c."

Ver. 3384. He plaieth Herode] This is much in character. The Parish-Clerks had always a principal share in the representation of Mysteries. See the Pref. to Dodsley's Old Plays, p. xii.

Ver. 3392. the neighe slie] Gower has this proverbe. *Conf. Am.* B. iii. f. 58.

An olde sawe is: who that is slygh
In place wher he may be nyghe,
He maketh the ferre leef loth.

Ver. 3449. Seinte Frideswide] *Seint* is one of the very few French adjectives, which, after their naturalization here, retained for a considerable time, I apprehend, a distinction of Gender. See the Essay, &c. p. xxviii.

Chaucer always writes it *Seinte*, when he uses it in the feminine gender; and the final *e* is often to be pronounced, as in this place. See ver. 7186. 10292. *Seinte* Marie.—ver. 7406. 7701. *Seinte* Charitee. Of the same form are *Excellente*, ver. 10459. and *Peregrine*, ver. 10742.

There is great propriety in making the Carpenter invoke St. Frideswide, who was Patroness of a considerable Priory at Oxford, and in high estimation there.

Ver. 3457. another clerk] He alludes to a story, which is told of the famous Thales by Plato in his *Theætetus*,

P. 127. Ed. Fic. but our author probably read it in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*. N. 36. It is there entitled, *D'uno Strologo ch'ebbe, nome Milensius, che fu ripreso da una donna.*

Ver. 3479. wightes] *Witches.* In the Teutonic, *Wite-vrouwe;* but whether they were so called from their *wisdom*, or from their being supposed to be clothed in *white*, is not clear. A *widow*, in that language, is called a *wit-vrouwe*, from the latter circumstance. Kilian in v. See Keysler's Dissertation *de Mulieribus Fatidicis*, in which, with a great deal of learning and probability, he has traced the popular notions of witches and witchcraft, in the northern parts of Europe, from a very early period. The faculty of floating upon the water, so as not to be capable of being drowned, is ascribed by Pliny to a race of male-witches in Pontus. Nat. Hist. l. vii. c. 2. non posse mergi, ne quidem vestibus degravatos.

Ver. 3480. the Night-spel] *The charm*, which follows, ver. 3483—6. is so lamely represented in all the MSS. that I have left it as I found it in the common editions. It might perhaps be a little improved by reading it thus:

Jesu Crist and Seint Benedight
Blisse this hous from every wight,
Fro the nightes mare. Pater-noster.
Wher wonest thou Seint Peter's suster?

In ver. 2. *wicked* may be left out upon the authority of MS. A. and others. It is certainly an unnecessary epithet.

ver 3. *Pater-noster* was often repeated in the middle, as well as at the end, of charms.

ver. 4. Instead of *wonest*, some copies read *wendest*. I do not understand how the Night-mare came to be allied to St. Peter.

To say the truth, I suspect this charm to be an interpolation. We have a Night-spel of another form in Gervas. Tilber. Otia Imper. l. iii. c. 93. See also the Decameron. D. vii. N. 1.

Fantasima, Fantasima,
Che di notte vai,
A coda ritta ci venisti,
A coda ritta te n'andrai, &c.

Concerning *the Night-mare*, see Keysler, *Antiq. Septent.* p. 497.

Ver. 3509. no labbe] No *blab.* Labben, Holl. Klappen, Belg. *blaterare.* Kilian.

Ver. 3512. harwed helle] Harried. Sax. *harrassed, subdued.* Our ancestors were very fond of a story of Christ's exploits in his *Descensus ad inferos*, which they called the *harrowing of Helle.* They took it, with several others of the same stamp, from the Gospel of Nicodemus, Fabr. Cod. Apoc. N. T. There is a Poem upon this subject in MS. *Bod.* 1687.

Hou Jesu Crist *herowed helle*
Of harde gestes ich wille telle.

And in the *Chester Whitsun-Playes*, MS. *Harl.* 2013. the company of Cookes, which was to exhibit the 17th Pageant, or the *Descensus ad inferna*, is thus addressed.

You Cookes with your carriage see that you doe well,
In pagente sett out *the harrowinge of helle.*

See also P. P. pass. xix. f. 101—3.

Ver. 3526. for God] *Pour dieu.* Fr.

Ver. 3539. The sorwe of Noe] It will be in vain, I apprehend, to look for this anecdote in Genesis, even in Dr. Kennicot's edition. Nicholas probably quoted it from the Mysteries, with which the Carpenter was better acquainted. The dispute between Noah and his wife upon this occasion makes a considerable part of the 3d Pageant of the *Chester Whitsun-Playes* above-mentioned. MS. *Harl.* 2013. The following lines will shew the grounds of her refusal to embark.

Noe. Wife, come in, why standes thou there?
Thou art ever froward, that dare I swere.
Come in on Godes halfe; tyme it were,
For fear lest that wee drowne.
Wife. Yea, Sir, set up your saile,
And rowe forth with evil haile,
For withouten anle faile
I wil not oute of this toune:
But I have my gossepes everich one,
One foote further I will not gone:
They shal not drown by St. John,
And I may save ther life.
They loved me full well by Christ.
But thou will let them into thie chist,
Ellis rowe forth, Noe, when thou list,
And get thee a newe wife.

At last Sem, with the assistance of his brethren, fetches her on board by force, and upon Noah's welcoming her she gives him a box on the ear.

These Playes are said, perhaps truly, to have been first written in 1328, but the Harleian MS. represents them, as they were to be exhibited in 1600. There is a better copy of the same Playes in the Bodl. Lib. E. N. 115. transcribed by one William Bedford, 1604, but even in that we see but small remains of the original diction and orthography.

Ver. 3624. His owen hond] *With* his own hand. So Gower, *Conf. Am.* fol. 76. b.

The crafte Mynerve of wolle fonde,
And made cloth *her owen honde.*

See also fol. 113. a.

Thyng which he sayd *his owne mouth.*

Ver. 3625. the stalkes] The *steps.* Gloss. Urr. but I rather believe the *renges* to mean the *steps*, and the *stalkes* the *upright pieces* of a ladder.

Ver. 3638. clum] From the Sax. clumian, *mussitare, murmurare.*

Ver. 3692. a trewe love] What kind of thing this was to be borne *under the tongue*, I do not understand. [See the Gloss. in v. Trewe-Love.—Add. note, Ed. 1798.]

Ver. 3703. I swelte and swete] *Sweltan*, Sax. signifies *to die.* Chaucer uses *swelte* to signify the effect of a great oppression of spirits. See ver. 1358. 9650. R. R. 2480. Hence our word *sultry* (*sweltry*) to express a *suffocating* heat.

Ver. 3709. it wol not be, *compame*] So MS. C. 1. It is put, for the sake of the rime, instead of the Fr. Compaine, *compagnon.* We use *friend* in the same sense. In MS. C. it is written *compaine;* in some of the best MSS. *com bame.* The Editions read—

As helpe me God *and sweet Saint Jame.*

Ver. 3724. thyn ore] The Editt. have made it *thy nore.* But *ore* is the right word. It signifies *grace, favour, protection.* See R. G. p. 381, mylce and ore, *mercy and grace.*—p. 475. in was ore ich am ido, *in whose protection I am put.* And *Li beaus disconus.* MS. *Cotton.* Cal. A. ii. fol. 49. b.

Syr Ly beaus thurstede sore,
And seyde; Maugys, *thyn ore,*
To drinke lette me go.

Where *thyn ore* must be understood to mean *with thy favour*, as in this passage of Chaucer.

Ver. 3768. the viretote] This is the reading of the best MSS. The explanation of the word I leave to the reader's sagacity.

Ver. 3772. more tawe on his distaf] So in Froissart. v. iv. p. 92. Ed. 1574. Il aura en bref temps autres *estoupes en sa quenoille.*

Ver. 3809. an hondbrede al aboute] *Al* has been added for the sake of the metre, but, I believe, unnecessarily. The original phrase was *an hondes brede*, an hand's breadth; so that *hondebrede*, as it is written in some MSS. would naturally continue to be pronounced as a trisyllable.

Ver. 3819. he fond neyther to selle] This is a French phrase. Fabliaux, t. ii. p. 282.

Ainc tant come il mist à descendre
Ne trouva point de pain à vendre.

In the next verse, *selle*, for the sake of the rime, is put for *sille.* Sax. *Syl.* Fr. *sueil.* Lat. *solum.*

Ver. 3853. Whan folk han laughed] The better MSS. read—*laughen*, which therefore is probably right. Chaucer sometimes forms the Participle of the past time in *en*

even in those verbs, of which he also uses the Participle in *ed*. See ver. 3311. *washen*: 7354. *faren*; for *washed*, and *fared*.

Ver. 3962. So the ik] *So the I*; so may I *the*, or *thrive*. This ancient phrase is terribly corrupted in most of the MSS. and Editt. It occurs again below, ver. 12881. 16397.

Ver. 3963. With blering] *With a trick put upon* a proud Miller. So ver. 17201. blered is thyn eye; *thou art cheated*. And R. R. ver. 3912. almost blered is mine eye; *I am almost cheated*.

Ver. 3977. As hath a leke] Boccace has the same allusion. Decam. Introd. to D. iv. *Et quegli, che contra alla mia eta parlando vanno, mostran male che conoscano, che per che il porro habbi il capo bianco, che la coda sia verde.*

Ver. 3980. Yet in our ashen] There is so great a resemblance between this line and the following of the *Churchyard Elegy*, Dodsley's Coll. vol. 4.

Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires—

that I should certainly have considered the latter as an imitation, if Mr. Gray himself had not referred us to the 169 (170) Sonnet of Petrarch, as his original. *Ch' i' veggio nel pensier &c.*

Ver. 3983. the chimbe] Kime, Teut. means the prominency of the staves beyond the head of the barrel. The imagery is very exact and beautiful.

Ver. 3992. of a souter a shipman, or a leche] The proverbial expression, *Ex sutore medicus*, was perhaps derived from the fable of Phædrus with that title. L. i. Fab. 14. The other, *Ex sutore nauclerus*, is alluded to by Pynson the printer, at the end of his Edit. of Littleton's Tenures, 1525. *Ames*, p. 488. Speaking of one Redman, another printer, he says,—"Miror profecto unde nunc tandem se fateatur typographum, nisi forte quum Diabolus *sutorem nauclerum*, et illum calcographum fecit."

Ver. 3994. it is half way prime] In the Discourse, &c. §. xiv. I have supposed that this means *half way* past *prime*, about half hour after seven A.M. the *half way* between Prime and Terce. In the fictitious *Modus tenendi Parliamentum*, a book not much older than Chaucer, *Hora mediæ primæ* seems to be used in the same sense. c. *de diebus et horis Parliamenti*. MS. *Cotton*. Nero. D. vi. On common days *Parliamentum debet inchoari* horâ mediæ primæ—*in diebus festivis* horâ primâ *propter divinum servitium*. In a contemporary French translation of this treatise, MS. *Harl*. 305. *hora mediæ primæ* is rendered *a la my heure le prime*; in an old English version, MS. *Harl*. 930. *the oure of myd pryme*; and in another, MS. *Harl*. 1309. *midde prime time*. Our author uses *prime large* ver. 10674. to signify that prime was considerably past.

Ver. 3999. set his howve] *His hood*. So in Tr. B. iii. 775. *an howve above a call* signifies *a hood over a cap*. And in P. P. fol. 4. Serjeants at Law are described *in howves of Silk*; but in fol. 16. it is said,

Shal no sergeant for his service were no *silke hode*.

Both words seem to be derived from the Teut. Hoofd; a head.

Hood and Cap being equally coverings for the head, *to set a man's howve* is the same as *to set his cap*. See n. on ver. 587.

Ver. 3927. a long pavade] It appears from ver. 3958. that *the pavade* was a weapon of offence. Of what sort I cannot tell, as I do not remember to have met with the word any where else. *Pavois*, Fr. in those times signified a *long shield*.

Ver. 3929. A joly popper] *A bodkin*, according to Sp. and Sk. who however produce no authority for such an interpretation. The name seems to be fitter for a pistol; though I am not prepared to prove that pistols were carried in the pocket in Chaucer's time.

Ver. 3934. a market-beter] *One that makes quarrels in markets*, says the Glossary. But, according to Mr. Upton, Pref. to Observ. on Shakesp. p. xx. "A market-beter is one who raises the price of the market.—*To beat the fire* Chaucer uses in the Knight's Tale, ver. 2255. 2294, for—*to rouse, to stir up*." Though this explanation of Mr. Upton's be not quite satisfactory, I think it far preferable to the other. [See the Gloss. in v. Market-Beter. In a more modern author *to beat the market* seems to signify merely *to go up and down the market*. Promos and Cassandra, by Whetstone, Act iv. s. 6. a servant says,

"Wyld foule, &c. are so deere,—
That this houre *I have the market bett*,
To drive a bargayne to my most profytt."
Add. note, Ed. 1798.]

Ver. 3939. deinous Simekin] His name was *Simon*, ver. 4020, 4. of which *Simekin* is the diminutive; and from his *disdainful, insolent* manners he had acquired the surname of *Deinous*, just as Nicholas, in the former tale, ver. 3199. "was cleped *Hendy*," from the very opposite behaviour. A great number of our surnames have been derived from qualities of the mind, and it is reasonable to suppose that at the beginning they were merely *personal*, like what we call *nicknames*. It is probable that the use of *hereditary* surnames was not, even in Chaucer's time, fully established among the lower classes of people.

Ver. 3968. the Soler hall] This is the true reading. It means *the Hall with the Soler*. Before the students in our Universities were incorporated, they lived in lodging-houses, called Inns, Halls, and Hostels, which were often distinguished by names taken from some peculiarity in their construction. One at Cambridge was called *Tyled Ostle*. Parker's Scel. Cantab. ap. Lel. Collect. t. v. p. 189. And at Oxford Oriel-College probably derives its name from a large Messuage, vulgarly known by the name of *Le Oriele*, upon the site of which it stands. Ayliffe's Hist. v. i. p. 287. An *Oriel*, or *Oriol*, was a Porch; (Du Cange, in v. Oriolum) as a *Soler* seems originally to have signified an open *gallery*, or *balcony*, at the top of the house; though latterly it has been used for any upper room, *loft*, or *garret*. (Idem, in v. Solarium. Watts, Gloss. ad Mat. Par.) Froissart, v. i. c. 234. Les femmes de la ville *monterent* en leurs logis et en *solliers*. In the description of Cambridge above cited, p. 188. there is mentioned a *Garret-ostle*. Mr. Warton strongly confirms this reading. Hist. of Eng. Po. p. 432. note n.

Ver. 4012. Strother] I cannot find any place of this name in England; there is a Struthers, or Strauther, in the Shire of Fife.

Ver. 4021. How fares] It may be observed, that Chaucer has given his Northern Clerks a Northern Dialect. I will just point out a few particulars in which their language differs from that used in the rest of his work.

1. They terminate the third person Singular, and the whole Plural number of their verbs in *es*, instead of *eth*, or *en*. So, in the present instance, we have—*fares*; and in the lines immediately following—*has*; *behoves*; *has*; *werkes*; *gas*; *wagges*; *falles*.

2. They use *a* in a great number of words, which Chaucer in other places writes with *o*; as *swa* for *so*; *hame* for *home*; *fra* for *fro*. ver. 4071. 2. *banes* and *anes* for *bones* and *ones*, &c. That this was the Northern practice appears from the following note. Hist. Abbat. Pipewell. Monast. Ang. v. i. p. 816. Et sciendum quod Monachi *boreales* scripserunt in cartis nostris *Rahage*, pro *Rohawe*.

3. Many of their words are of the obsolete Saxon form; as ver. 4031. *henen* for *hennes*; ver. 4076. *whilke* for *whiche*; ver. 4083. *alswa* for *also*; ver. 4128. *slike* from *swilke*, instead of *swiche*; ver. 4130. *gar* for *make*, or *let*; &c.

4. If I am not mistaken, he has designedly given them a vulgar, ungrammatical phraseology. I do not remember in any other part of his writings such a line as ver. 4043.

I *is* as ill a miller as *is* ye.

See also ver. 4084. I *is*; ver. 4087. Thou *is*.

Ver. 4027. I hope] *I expect*. It signifies the mere expectation of a future event, whether good or evil, as ἐλπίζω

Gr. and *spero* Lat. often do. So in Shakespeare, Ant. and Cl.

I cannot *hope*
Cæsar and Anthony shall well greet together.

Ver. 4038. answered] Sax. *andswarode* is a compound word of and, *contra*, and *swaran*, which, in the Islandic, signifies *dicere*. Barthol. Ant. Dan. p. 690. Thorbiorg svarar. *Thorbiorga dicit*. This etymology accounts for its being accented upon the middle syllable—*answéred* See ver. 4126.

Ver. 4053. to the wolf thus spake the mare] The story alluded to is told of a mule in *Cent. Nov. Ant.* N. 91. The Mule pretends, that his name is written upon the bottom of his hind-foot. The Wolf attempting to read it, the Mule gives him a kick on the forehead and kills him. Upon which the Fox, who was present, observes, *Ogni huomo, che sa lettera, non è savio*. There is a similar story of a Wolf and *a Mare*, in *the most delectable History of Reynard the Fox*. Edit. 1701. ch. xviii. but whether that story be in Caxton's edition; whether it be in the Dutch book from which Caxton translated; whether the Dutch book be an original composition or a translation; when it was written, &c., are all points, upon which I wish to be informed by some more knowing Antiquary. I will just observe that one of the foxes tricks, ch. xiv. seems to be alluded to by Richal de Berbeiffeil (*Richard de Berbezieux*) a Provençal poet, who died in 1383. *Quadrio*, t. ii. p. 144. I will cite the passage from MS. *Crofts*. fol. cxci. though I do not understand the last clause.

Anc Ranart d'Isengrin
Tan gen no sap venjar,
Qan lo fiz escorzar,
Ell dit per eschirnir
Chapels et gan Com eu faz no mair.

Reynard here seems to have procured Isegrim's skin to be stript off, to make him *a hood and gloves*. In the English, he procures the Wolfes shoes to be pulled off and put upon his own feet.

Ver. 4059. a levesell] This word is plainly derived from the Sax. lefe, *folium*, and setl, *sedes*. *Metesel* is a word of the same form. Peter of Langt. p. 334. "*It neghed nere* metesel." *It was near the time of sitting down to dinner*. A *levesell* therefore signifies a *leafy seat*, an *arbour*. It may be understood in the same sense in the Persones Tale, p. 155. "*right as the gay* levesell *at the Taverne is signe of the wein that is in the celler*."

Ver. 4094. make a clerkes berde] i. e. *cheat him*. *Faire la barbe*, Fr. is to *shave*, or *trim* the beard; but Chaucer translates the phrase literally, at least when he uses it in its metaphorical sense. See ver. 5943. and H. of F. ii. 181. Boccace has the same metaphor. *Decam.* viii. 10. Speaking of some exorbitant cheats, he says, that they applied themselves—"*non a* radere *ma a scorticare huomini*:" and a little lower —"*si a soavemente* la barbiera *saputo menare il rasoio*."

Ver. 4138. chalons] Whatever they were, they probably were so called from their being made at *Chalons*. The Glossary interprets them to be *blankets*; but a passage in the Monast. v. ii. p. 720. would rather lead one to suppose them *coverlets*;—aut pannos pictos, qui vocantur *Chalons*, loco lectisternii.

Ver. 4206. a cokenay] That this is a term of contempt, borrowed originally from the kitchen, is very probable. A Cook, in the base Latinity, was called *Coquinator* and *Coquinarius*, from either of which *Cokenay* might easily be derived. In P. P. fol. xxxv. b.

And yet I say by my soule I have no salt bacon,
Ne no *cokeney* by Christe coloppes to make.

It seems to signify a *Cook*. And so, perhaps, in the Turnament of Tottenham. Anc. Poet. t. ii. p. 24.

At that feast were they served in rich array;
Every five and five had a *cokeney*.

That is, I suppose, a *cook*, or *scullion*, to attend them.

In those rimes ascribed to Hugh Bigot, which Camden has published, Brit. col. 451. (upon what authority, I know not)

"Were I in my castle of Bungey
"Upon the river of Waveney,
"I would ne care for the king of *Cockeney*."

The author, in calling London *Cockeney*, might possibly allude to that imaginary country of idleness and luxury, which was anciently known by the name of *Cokaigne*, or *Cocagne*; a name which Hickes has shewn to be derived from *Coquina*. Gr. A. S. p. 231. He has there published an excellent description of the *country of Cokaigne*, in old English verse, but probably translated from the French. At least the French have had the same fable among them, for Boileau plainly alludes to it. Sat. vi.

Paris est pour un riche *un païs de Cocagne*.

The festival of *La Cocagna* at Naples, described by Keysler, v. ii. p. 369. appears to have the same foundation. It probably commenced under the Norman government. There is a mock-heroic poem, in the Sicilian dialect, entitled *La Cuccagna conquistata*, by Gio. Battista Basili, Palerm. 1674. in which the description of *l'alma città di Cuccagna* begins thus:

Sedi Cuccagna sutta una montagna
Di furmaggiu grattatu, et havi in cima
Di maccaruni una caudara magna.

Ver. 4318. Him *thar not*] I have restored this old word, upon the authority of the best MSS. in this and other places. See ver. 5911. 5918. 6947. 17301. It is derived from the Sax. thearfian, *necesse habere*; and is generally used as an Impersonal. "Him *behoveth* not to *winne* or *acquire* good, that doth evil." I have ventured to substitute *winne* instead of the common reading *wene*, of which I could make no sense. MS. B. 3. reads. *He may* nought *weine* w.

Ver. 4345. a Jacke of Dover] The general purport of this phrase is sufficiently explained in the following line; but the particular meaning I have not been able to investigate.

Ver. 4348. of thy perselee] an old *Boke of Kokery*, which I have consulted upon this occasion, MS. *Harl.* 4016. has a receipt for "*Gose* or capon *farced*," but it does not mention *parseley*. It only says in general terms, "Take yolkes of eyeron (egges) hard ysodde and hew hem smale with *the herbes*—and caste therto pouder of ginger peper canell and salt *and grapes in tyme of yere*." I have lately met with another, I suppose, the true, receipt for stuffing a Goose in MS. *Harl.* 279. It begins—"Take *percely* and swynis grese or sewet of a shepe and parboyle hem, &c."

Ver. 4355. soth play *quade spel*] As this is said to have been a *Flemish* proverb, I have inserted *spel* from MSS. Ask. 1. 2. instead of the common reading *play*. *Spel*, in Teut. is *ludus*, as *quade*, or *quaed*, is *malus*. Sir John Harrington, in his *Apologie of Poetrie*, quotes an old saying of the same import. *Soth bourde is no bourde*.

Ver. 4375. riding—in Chepe] There were sometimes Justs in Cheapside. Hollings. v. ii. p. 348. But perhaps any procession may be meant. MSS. Ask. 1. 2. read *revel*.

Ver. 4377. And til] *And* is added.

Ver. 4394. *they* play] So MS. C. All the rest read *he*.

Ver. 4413. a louke] *A receiver to a thief*, Sp. Sk. This explanation, I believe, is a mere fancy, but I have nothing better to propose.

Ver. 4421. Our Hoste saw wel] Concerning the time of day meant to be pointed out in the following lines, see the Discourse &c. §. v.

Ver. 4450. Malkins maidenhede] A common phrase. P. P. fol. vii. a. b.

Ye have no more merit of masse ne of houres
Than *Malkin of hire maydenhood*, that no man desireth.

Ver. 4467. *But* Chaucer] So MSS. C. 1. Ask. 1. 2. In the Editt. it had been strangely corrupted into *That*.

Ver. 4477. In youthe he made of Ceys] The story of Ceyx and Alcyone is related in the introduction to the poem, which was for some time called "*the Dreme of Chaucer*," but which, in the MSS. Fairf. 16. and Bod. 638. is more properly entitled "*the booke of the Duchesse*." The following note, which has been prefixed to it in all the

later editions, is in MS. Fairf. in the hand-writing of John Stowe. "*By the person of a mourning Knight sitting under an oke is meant John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, greatly lamenting the death of one whom hee entirely loved, supposed to be Blanche the Duchesse.*" I believe John is very right in his conjecture. Chaucer himself, in his Leg. of G. W. 418. says, that he made "*the deth of Blaunche the Duchesse;*" and in the poem now under consideration he plainly alludes to her name, ver. 948.

> "And faire *white* she hete;
> That was my ladys name right."

On the other hand, the Knight is represented, ver. 455, 6.

> "Of the age of *four and twenty* yere,
> Upon his berde but litel here"—

whereas John of Gaunt, at the death of Blanche in 1369, was about *nine and twenty* years of age. But this perhaps was a designed misrepresentation.

I will just observe that the manner, in which Chaucer speaks of his own age at the time of this composition, is a confirmation of what has been suggested in the Discourse &c. n. 3. that the Canterbury Tales were the work of his latest years. When the Dutchess Blanch died, he was *one and forty;* a time of life, which, I believe, a man seldom calls his *youth*, till he is advanced at least twenty years beyond it.

Ver. 4481. the Seintes legende of Cupide] In the Editt. it is called *the Legende of good women;* in MS. Fairf. 16. *the Legendis of* IX *gode women*. According to Lydgate, Prol. to Boccace, the number was to have been *nineteen;* and perhaps the Legende itself affords some ground for this notion. See ver. 183. and C. L. ver. 108. But this number was probably never completed, and the last story of Hypermnestra is seemingly unfinished.

In an imperfect copy of the *Master of the game*, dedicated to Henry, eldest son of Henry IV. (MS. *Harl.* 6324.) is the following passage. "As Chaucer seithe in his prolog. of XXV. good wymmen, by writing have men mynde of thynges passed." See ver. 18.

In this passage the Man of Lawe omits two Ladies, viz. Cleopatra and Philomela, whose histories are in the Legende; and he enumerates eight others, of whom there are no histories in the Legende, as we have it at present. Are we to suppose, that they have been lost?

With respect to the time of Chaucer's writing the Legende, see the Discourse &c. n. 3.

Ver. 4496. The plaint of Deianire] This reading is supported by several MSS. of middling authority; but the better copies read *Diane*, and MS. A. *Syane*. There is a nymph *Cyane* in Ovid, Metam. l. v. who weeps herself into a fountain; but not for love.

Ver. 4512. To Muses, that men clepe Pierides] He rather means, I think, the daughters of Pierus, who contended with the Muses, and were changed into Pies. Ovid, Metam. l. v.

Ver. 4515. with hawebake] So MS. A. The other readings are—hawe i bake. MSS. Ask. 1. 2.—hawke bake. B E.—hevy bake. B. e. i.—have wee bauke. E.—have we bake. B. δ. HA.—hawe ybake. Ca. 2.—the whiche hath no lak. Ca. 1.—The reader may take his choice of them.

Ver. 4534. Bet is to dien] This saying of Solomon is quoted in Rom. de la Ro. 8573. Mieux vault mourir que pauvres estre.

Ver. 4617. In sterres] This passage is imitated from the *Megacosmus* of *Bernardus Sylvestris*, an eminent philosopher and poet about the middle of the XIIth Century. Fabric. Bibl. Med. Ætat. in v. *Bernardus Carnotensis* et Sylvestris. I will transcribe here the original lines from MS. Bod. 1265.

> Præjacet in stellis series, quam longior ætas
> Explicet et spatiis temporis ordo suis,
> *Sceptra Phoronei, fratrum discordia Thebis,*
> *Flamma Phaëthontis, Deucalionis aquæ.*
> In stellis Codri paupertas, copia Croesi,
> Incestus Paridis, Hippolytique pudor.
> *In stellis Priami species, audacia Turni,*
> *Sensus Ulyxeus, Herculeusque vigor.*
> In stellis pugil est Pollux et navita Typhis
> Et Cicero rhetor et geometra Thales.
> In stellis lepidum dictat Maro, Milo figurat,
> Fulgurat in Latia nobilitate Nero.
> Astra notat Persis, Ægyptus parturit artes,
> Græcia docta legit, prælia Roma gerit.

The four lines in Italics are quoted in the Margin of MS. C. 1.

Ver. 4709. Or Ilion brent] There is great confusion among the MSS. in this line. I have made the best sense that I coud, without departing too far from them. MS. A. reads,

> "Or whanne Ilion brende Thebes the citee."

which might lead one to conjecture,

> "Or whanne *Philip* brende Thebes the citee."

This last phrase is French. See Froissart, v. i. c. 225. dedans Rénes *la cité* et environ.

Ver. 4725. O Mars o Atyzar] So A. Other MSS. read, *Athasir, Atayzer, Attezer, Atazir.* I am not Astrologer enough to determine which is the right word. *Atizar*, SPAN. and *attiser*, FR. signify *to light a fire, to inflame.* But whether that sense can have any place here, I am doubtful.

Ver. 4732. is ther non electioun] In the margin of MS. C. 1. is the following quotation. Omnes concordati sunt, quod Electiones sint debiles, nisi in divitibus: habent enim isti, licet debilitentur eorum electiones, radicem, i. nativitates eorum, quæ confortat omnem planetam debilem in itinere, &c. It is taken from *Liber Electionum* by one *Zael*. MS. *Harl.* 80. *Bod.* 1648.

Ver. 4841. O soden wo] I shall transcribe the following passage from the Margin of MS. C. 1. though I know not from what author it is borrowed, as it confirms the readings adopted in the text. *Semper mundanæ lætitiæ tristitia repentina succedit. Mundana igitur felicitas multis amaritudinibus est respersa. Extrema gaudii luctus occupat. Audi ergo salubre consilium; in die bonorum ne immemor sis malorum.* The Editt. read O Soudan, wo &c.

Ver. 4858. fote-hot] *Hastily, with all expedition.* See Gower, Conf. Am. fol. 816.

> And forth with all anone *fote hote*
> He stale the cowe—

See also R. R. 3827. *Haut le pied*, in French, has the same signification. Cotgrave, in v. So that I should suspect *hot*, in our phrase, to be a corruption of *haut*.

Ver. 5002. The following plot of the Knight against Constance, from this ver. to ver. 5030. and also her adventure with the Steward, from ver. 5330 to ver. 5344. are both to be found, with some small variations, in a Story in the *Gesta Romanorum*, ch. 101. MS. *Harl.* 2270. Occleve has versified the whole story; as he has another from the same collection, *De Johnatha et muliere mala*, ch. 54. *Ibid.* (CXX. *Edit.*) See an excellent MS. of Occleve's works, *Bib. Reg.* 17 D. vi. The first poem begins,—"In the Romain jestes writen is thus:" the second,—"Some time an Emperour prudent and wise."

Ver. 5004. how he might quite hire while] *Her time, labour* &c. So in the Leg. of Ariadne, v. ult. "the divel *quite him his while.*"

Ver. 5191. O messager] Quid turpius ebrioso, cui fætor in ore, tremor in corpore; qui promit stulta, prodit occulta; cui mens alienatur, facies transformatur? nullum enim latet secretum ubi regnat ebrietas. Marg. C. 1.

Ver. 5345. O foule lust] O extrema libidinis turpitudo, quæ non solum mentem effeminat, set etiam corpus enervat: semper secuntur dolor et pœnitentia post, &c. Marg. C. 1.

Ver. 5506. Som men wold sayn] See Gower, *Conf. Am.* B. ii. fol. 35. b. 2. and the Discourse &c. §. XV.

In another circumstance, which has been introduced

with the same words, ver. 5429. our Author agrees with Gower, *ibid.* fol. 35. a l.

Ver. 5527. your Custance] I have added *your*, for the sake of the metre.

Ver. 5552. But litel while] In Marg. C. I. A mane usque ad vesperam mutabitur tempus. tenent tympanum et gaudent ad sonum organi, &c.

Ver. 5555. Who lived ever] Ibid. Quis unquam unicam diem totam in sua dilectione duxit jocundam? quem in aliqua parte diei reatus conscientiæ, viz. impetus iræ, vel motus concupiscentiæ non turbavit; quem livor, vel ardor avaritiæ, vel tumor superbiæ non vexavit, quem aliqua jactura, vel offensa, vel passio non commoverit, &c.

Ver. 5583. I have already given my reasons for following the best MSS. in placing this Prologue of the Wife of Bathe next to the Man of Lawes Tale. Discourse, &c. § xvi. The want of a few verses to connect this Prologue with the preceding Tale was perceived long ago; and the defect was attempted to be supplied by the author of the following lines, which in MS. B. are prefixed to the common Prologue.

> Oure oost gan tho to loke up anon.
> Gode men, quod he, herkeneth everichone,
> As evere mote I drynke wyn or ale,
> This marchant hath itold a mery tale,
> Howe Januarie hadde a lither jape,
> His wyf put in his hood an ape.
> But hereof I wil leve off as now.
> Dame wyf of Bathe, quod he, I pray you
> Telle us a tale now nexte after this.
> Sir oost, quod she, so god my soule blis,
> As I fully thereto wil consente,
> And also it is myn hole entente,
> To done yow alle disporte as that I can.
> But holde me excused; I am a woman.
> I can not reherse as these clerkes kune.
> And riyt anon she hath hir tale bygunne.
> Experience &c.

The same lines are in MSS. *Bod.* ζ and ζ. I print them here, in order to justify myself for not inserting them in the text.

Ver. 5626. I have wedded five] After this verse, the six following are in MSS. C. 1. HA. C. 2. and in Edit. Ca. 2.

> Of whiche I have pyked out the beste
> Bothe of here nether purs and of here cheste.
> Diverse scoles maken parfyt clerkes,
> And diverse practyk in many sondry werkes
> Maken the werkman parfyt sekirly:
> Of five husbondes scoleryng am I,
> Welcome the sixthe &c.

If these lines are not Chaucer's, they are certainly more in his manner than the generality of the imitations of him. Perhaps he wrote them, and afterwards blotted them out. They come in but awkwardly here, and he has used the principal idea in another place. March. T. ver. 9301.

Ver. 5657. The dart is sette] See Lydg. Boc. fol. xxvi.

> And oft it happeneth, he that hath best ron
> Doth not the *spere* like his desert possede.

Ver. 5677. I graunt it wel, I have non envie,
Though maidenhed preferre bigamie] So these two verses stand, without any material difference, in all the MSS. If they are right, we must understand *preferre* to signify the same as *be preferred to*. Knowing no example of such a construction, I have ventured at an alteration of the text. It might have been as well, perhaps, to have left the first line untouched, and to have corrected the second only thus:

> Though maidenhed *be prefer'd to* bigamie.

Ver. 5681. a lord in his houshold] See 2 Tim. ii. 20.

Ver. 5764. writeth Ptholomee] In the Margin of MS. C. 1. is the following quotation: *Qui per alios non corrigitur, alii per ipsum corrigentur.* But I cannot find any such passage in the *Almageste*. I suspect that the Wife of Bathes copy of Ptolemy was very different from any that I have been able to meet with. See another quotation from him, ver. 5906.

Ver. 5799. The bacon—at Donmow] See Blount's Ant. Tenures, p. 162. and P. P. 446. This whimsical institution was not peculiar to Dunmow. There was the same in Bretagne. "A l'Abbaie Sainct Melaine, près Rennes, y a, plus de six cens ans sont, un costé de lard encore tout frais et non corrompu; et neantmoins voué et ordonné aux premiers, qui par an et jour ensemble mariez ont vescu sans debat, grondement, et sans s'en repentir." *Contes d'Eutrap*, t. ii. p. 161.

Ver. 5810. Sweren and lien] *Rom. de la R.* ver. 19013.

> Car plus hardiment que nulz homs
> Certainement jurent et mentent.

Ver. 5811. (I say not this] This parenthesis seems to be rather belonging to Chaucer himself than to the Wife of Bathe.

Ver. 5814. Shal beren hem on hond] *Shal make them believe falsely*, the cow is *wood*. The latter words may either signify that the cow is *mad*, or *made of wood*. Which of the two is the preferable interpretation, it will be safest not to determine, till we can discover the old story to which this phrase seems to be a proverbial allusion.

Ver. 5817. Sire olde Kaynard] *Cagnard*, or *Caignard*, was a French term of reproach, which seems to have been originally derived from *Canis*. Menage, in v. In the following speech it would be endless to produce all Chaucer's imitations. The beginning is from the fragment of Theophrastus, quoted by *St. Jerome*, c. Jovin. l. i., and by *John of Salisbury*, Polycrat. l. viii. c. xi. See also *Rom. de la R.* ver. 8967. et suiv.

Ver. 5832. chamberere] *A chamber-maid.* Fr. See 8695. 8853.

> Son varlet et sa chamberiere,
> Aussi sa seur et sa nourrice
> Et sa mere, si moult n'est nice.

Rom. de la R. 14480.

Ver. 5923. in the apostles name] See 1 Tim. ii. 9.

Ver. 6042. Metellius] This story is told by Pliny, Nat. Hist. l. xiv. c. 13. of one *Mecenius*; but Chaucer probably followed Valerius Maximus, l. vi. c. 3.

Ver. 6049. In woman vinolent] *Rom. de la R.* 14222.

> Car puisque femme est enyvrée
> El n'a point en soy de deffence.—

Ver. 6065. Seint Joce] or Josse, *Sanctus Judocus*, was a Saint of Ponthieu. *Vocab. Hagiol.* prefixed to Menage, *Etymol. Fr.*

Ver. 6137. visitations] *Rom de la R.* 12492.

> Souvent voise à la mere Eglise,
> Et face visitations
> Aux nopces, aux processions,
> Aux jeux, aux festes, aux caroles.—

Ver. 6151. bobance] *Boasting, pride.* Fr. en orgueil et en *bobans*. Froissart, v. iv. c. 70. In the Editt. it is *bostance*. The thought in the next lines is taken from *Rom. de la R.* 13914.

> Moult a souris povre recours,
> Et met en grand peril la druge,
> Qui n'a qu'ung partuys à refuge.

Ver. 6191—4. These four lines are wanting in MSS. A Ask. 1. 2. and several others. And so are the eight lines from ver. 6201. to ver. 6208. incl. They certainly might very well be spared.

Ver. 6216. with his fist] MS. A. reads—*on the lyste*—and so does Ed. Ca. 2. with the addition of (what was at first a marginal gloss) *on the Cheke*. In support of this reading it may be observed, that Sir Thomas More, among many Chaucerian phrases, has this, in his *Merry Jest of a Serjeant* &c.

> And with his fist
> *Upon the lyst*
> He gave him such a blow.—

Ver. 6227. open-heded] This is literally from Val. Max. l. vi. c. 3. uxorem dimisit, quod eam *capite aperto* foris versatam cognoverat. He gives the reason of this severity. Lex enim tibi meos tantum præfinit oculos, quibus formam tuam approbes. His decoris instrumenta compara: his esto speciosa, &c.

Ver. 6230. a sommer-game] This expression, I suppose, took its rise from the Summer being the usual season for Games. It is used in P. P. fol. xxvii.

I have lever here an harlotry, or a Somers game—

This story is also from Val. Max. i. vi. c. 3. P. Sempronius Sophus—conjugem repudii notâ affecit, nihil aliud quam se ignorante *ludos* ausam spectare.

Ver. 6253. Valerie, and Theophrast] Some account has been given of these two treatises in the Discourse &c. n. 19. As to the rest of the contents of this volume, Hieronymus *contra Jovinianum*, and Tertullian *de Pallio* are sufficiently known; and so are the letters of Eloisa and Abelard, the Parables of Solomon, and Ovid's Art of Love. I know of no *Trotula*, but one, whose book *Curandarum ægritudinum muliebrium, ante, in, et post partum*, is printed *int. Medicos antiquos*, Ven. 1547. What is meant by *Crisippus* I cannot guess.

Ver. 6258. Which book was ther] I have here departed from the MSS. which all read,—In which book ther was eke.—Perhaps, however, it might be sufficient to put a full stop after Jovinian.

Ver. 6284. exaltation] In the old Astrology, a Planet was said to be in its Exaltation, when it was in that sign of the Zodiac, in which it was supposed to exert its strongest influence. The opposite sign was called its Dejection, as in that it was supposed to be weakest. To take the instance in the text, the Exaltation of Venus was in *Pisces*, (see also ver. 10587), and her Dejection of course in *Virgo*. But in *Virgo* was the Exaltation of Mercury.

She is the welthe and the rysynge
The lust the joy and the lykynge
Unto Mercury.—

Gower, *Conf. Am.* l. vii. fol. 147. So in ver. 10098. Cancer is called *Joves exaltation*.

Ver. 6303. Tho redde he] Most of the following instances are mentioned in the *Epistola Valerii ad Rufinum de non ducendâ uxore*. See also *Rom. de la R.* 9140. 9615. et suiv.

Ver. 6329. Of Lima — and of Lucie] In the *Epistola Valerii*, &c. MS. *Reg.* 12. D. iii. the story is told thus: *Luna* virum suum interfecit quem nimis odivit: *Lucilia* suum quem nimis amavit. Illa sponte miscuit aconita: hæc decepta furorem propinavit pro amoris poculo. *Lima* and *Luna* in many MSS. are only distinguishable by a small stroke over the *i*, which may be easily overlooked where it is, and supposed where it is not.

Ver. 6339. Latumeus] In MSS. Ask. 1. 2. it is *Latynius*: In the *Epistola Valerii* just cited, *Pavorinus* flens ait Arrio—.

Ver. 6355. mo proverbes] For the following aphorisms see Prov. xxi. 9. 19. and xi. 22. The observation in ver. 6364. is in Herodotus. B. i. p. 5. Ed. Wesseling.

Ver. 6414. The Sompnour herd the Frere gale] The same word occurs below, ver. 6918. "and let the Sompnour *gale*." In both places it seems to be used metaphorically. *Galan*, Sax. signifies *canere*. It is used literally in the Court of Love, ver. 1357. where the nightingale is said—*to crie and gale*. Hence its name, *Nightegale*, or *Nightengale*. In the Island. *at gala* is *ululare*, *Galli more exclamare*; and *Hana gal*; *Gallicinium*. Gudm. And. Lex. Island.

Ver. 6439. King Artour] I hope that Chaucer, by placing his Elf-quene *in the dayes of King Artour*, did not mean to intimate that the two monarchies were equally fabulous and visionary. Master *Wace* has judged more candidly of the exploits of our British hero.

Ne tut mensonge, ne tut veir;
Ne tut folie, ne tut saveir.
Tant unt li conteor conté,
E li fableor tant fablé,
Pur les contes enbelecer,
Ke tut unt fait fable sembler.
Le Brut. MS. *Cotton*. Vitell. A. 7.

Ver. 6441. faerie] *Féerie*. Fr. from *Fée*, the French name for those fantastical beings which in the Gothic languages are called *Alfs*, or *Elves*. The corresponding names to *Fée*, in the other Romance dialects, are *Fata*, Ital. and *Hada*, Span. so that it is probable, that all three are derived from the Lat. *Fatum*, which in the barbarous ages was corrupted into *Fatus* and *Fata*. See Menage, in v. Fee. Du Cange, in v. Fadus.

Our system of Faerie would have been much more complete, if all our ancient writers had taken the same laudable pains to inform us upon that head, that Gervase of Tilbery has done. Ot. Imp. Dec. iii. c. 61, 2. He mentions two species of Dæmons in England, which I do not recollect to have met with in any other author. The first are those, *quos Galli Neptunos, Angli* Portunos *nominant*. Of the others he says—*Est in Anglia quoddam dæmonum genus, quod suo idiomate* Grant *nominant, adinstar pulli equini anniculi, tibiis erectum, oculis scintillantibus &c.*

This last seems to have been a Dæmon *sui generis*, but the *Portunus* appears to have resembled the *Gobelin*, as described by Orderic. Vital. l. v. p. 556. Speaking of the miracles of St. Taurinus at Evreux in Normandy, he says —Dæmon enim, quem de Dianæ phano expulit, adhuc in eâdem urbe degit, et in variis frequenter formis apparens neminem lædit. Hunc vulgus *Gobelinum* * appellat, et per merita Sancti Taurini ab humanâ læsione coercitum usque hodie affirmat.

In the same manner Gervase says of the *Portuni*. Id illis insitum est, ut obsequi possint et obesse non possint. He adds indeed an exception. Verum unicum quasi modulum nocendi habent. Cum enim inter ambiguas noctis tenebras Angli solitarii quandoque equitant, *Portunus* nonnunquam invisus equitanti se copulat, et cum diutius comitatur euntem, tandem loris arreptis equum in lutum ad manum ducit, in quo dum infixus volutatur, *Portunus* exlens *cachinnum facit*, et sic hujuscemodi ludibrio humanam simplicitatem deridet.—This is exactly such a prank as our *Hob*, or *Hop, goblin* was used to play. See the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. A. 2. S. 1. and Drayton's *Nymphidia* †.

It should be observed, that the *Portuni*, according to Gervase, were of the true Faery size, *staturâ pusilli dimidium pollicis non habentes*. But then indeed they were *senili vultu, facie corrugatâ*. In Dec. i. c. 18. he describes another species of harmless Dæmons, called *Folletí*. Esprits Follets. Fr. Foletti. Ital.

The *Incubus* mentioned below, ver. 6462. was a Faery of not quite so harmless a nature. He succeeded to the ancient *Fauni*, and like them was supposed to inflict that oppression, which goes under the name of the *Ephialtes*, or *Nightmare*. Pliny calls the Ephialtes *Faunorum in quiete ludibria*. N. H. l. 25. x. The *Incubus* however, as Chaucer insinuates, exerted his powers *for love* as well as *for hate*. Gervas. Tilber. Dec. i. c. 17. Vidimus quosdam Dæmones tanto zelo mulieres amare quod ad inaudita prorumpunt ludibria, et cum ad concubitum earum accedunt mirâ mole eas opprimunt, nec ab aliis videntur.

Ver. 6457. undermeles] The undermele, i. e. *undernmete*, was the dinner of our ancestors. See the note on ver. 8136.

Ver. 6466. came riding *fro river*] Or, *fro the river*, as it is in some MSS. It means *from hawking at water-fowl*. Froissart, v. i. c. 140. Le Comte de Flandres estoit tousjours *en riviere*—un jour advint qu'il alla voller *en la riviere*—et getta son fauconnier un faucon *apres le heron*, et le Comte aussi un—So in c. 210. he says, that Edward III. had with him in his army—trente fauconniers à cheval, chargez

* Gobelinum. v. Du Cange. Gloss. Gr. v. Κοβόλοι.

† I shall here correct a mistake of my own in the Discourse &c. n. 23. I have supposed that Shakespeare might have followed Drayton in his Faery system. I have since observed that *Don Quixot*, which was not published till 1605, is cited in the *Nymphidia*, whereas we have an Edition of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1600. So that Drayton undoubtedly followed Shakespeare.

d'oiseaux, et bien soixante couples de forts chiens et autant de levriers: dont il alloit, chacun jour, ou en chace ou *en riviere*, ainsi que il luy plaisoit. Sire Thopas is described as following this knightly sport, ver. 13665.

He coude hunte at the wilde dere,
And ride on hauking *for the rivere*
With grey goshauk on honde.

Ver. 6710. Ful selde up riseth] Dante, Purg. vii. 121.

Rade volte risurge per li rami
L'humana probitate: et questo vuole
Quei che la da, perche da se si chiami.

Ver. 6741. For gentillesse] A great deal of this reasoning is copied from Boethius de Consol. l. iii. Pr. 6. See also R. R. 2180, & seq.

For villanie maketh villeine,
And by his dedes a chorle is seine, &c.

Ver. 6777. Poverte is hateful good] In this commendation of Poverty, our author seems plainly to have had in view the following passage of a fabulous conference between the Emperour Adrian and Secundus the philosopher, reported by Vincent of Beauvais, *Spec. Histor.* l. x. c. 71. Quid est Paupertas? *Odibile bonum;* sanitatis mater; remotio curarum; *sapientiæ repertrix;* negotium sine damno; *possessio absque calumnia;* sine sollicitudine felicitas. What Vincent has there published appears to have been extracted from a larger collection of *Gnomæ* under the name of Secundus, which are still extant in Greek and Latin. See Fabric. Bib. Gr. l. vi. c. x. and MS. *Harl.* 399. The author of *Pierce Ploughman* has quoted and paraphrased the same passage, fol. 75.

Ver. 6781. elenge] *Strange;* probably from the old Fr. *esloingné.* So in the Cuckow and Nightingale, ver. 115.

Thy songes ben so *elenge* in good fay.

And in P. P. fol. 3. b.

Where the cat is a kiten, the court is full *elenge.*

See also fol. 46. b. [See the Gloss. in v. Elenge. Add. note. Ed. 1798.]

Ver. 6797. For filthe, and elde also, so] Though none of the MSS. that I have seen, authorize the insertion of the second *so*, it seems absolutely necessary.

Ver. 6858. auctoritees] *Auctoritas* was the usual word for what we call a *text* of Scripture. MS. *Harl.* 106. 10. Expositio *auctoritatis*, Majus gaudium super uno peccatore. Ibid. 21. Expositio *auctoritatis*, Stetit populus de longe &c.

Ver. 6931. the nale] the *Ale-house.* P. P. fol. 32. b.

And than satten some and songe at the *nale.*

Skinner supposes it to be a corruption of *inn-ale*, which is not impossible. [See the Gloss. in v. Nalé. Add. note. Ed. 1798.]

Ver. 6959. an old ribibe] He calls her below, ver. 7155. an olde *rebekke.* They were both names for the same musical instrument. See Menage, in. v. *Rebec. Ribeba*, in the Decameron, ix. 5. is rendered by Maçon, the old French translator, *Rebec* and *Guiterne.* Chaucer uses also the diminutive *Ribible*, ver. 3331. 4395. How this instrument came to be put for an old woman, I cannot guess, unless perhaps from its shrilliness. An old writer, quoted by Du Cange, in v. Baudosa, has the following lines in his description of a Concert.

Quidam *rebeccam* arcuabant
Muliebrem vocem confingentes.

Ver. 6990. wariangles] I have nothing to say either in refutation or support of Mr. Speght's explanation of this word—"A kind of birds full of noise, and very ravenous, preying upon others, which when they have taken, they use to hang upon a thorne or pricke, and teare them in peeces, and devour them. And the common opinion is, that the thorne, whereupon they thus fasten them and eat them, is afterward poisonsome. In Staffordshire and Shropshire the name is common."—except that Cotgrave, in his Fr. Dict. explains *Arneat* to signify *The ravenous bird called a Shrike, Nynmurder*, Wariangle.—[See the Gloss. in v. Wariangles. Add. note, Ed. 1798.]

Ver. 7018. to hevy or to hote] We have nearly the same expression in Froissart, v. i. c. 229. ne laissoient riens à prendre, s'il n'estoit *trop chaud*, trop froid, ou *trop pesant*

Ver. 7092. As to the Phitonesse did Samuel] So MS. A The Editt. read,

As the Phitonesse did to Samuel—

which is certainly wrong. See 1 Sam. xxviii. Our author uses *Phitonesse* for *Pythonesse.* H. F. iii. 171. And so does Gower, *Conf. Amant.* fol. 140.

The *Phitonesse* in Samary.—

Ver. 7145. liard] A common appellative for a horse, from its *grey* colour, as *bayard* was from *bay.* See before, ver. 4113. P. P. fol. 92.

He lyght downe of *liarde* and ladde him in his hand.

Bp. Douglas, in his Virgil, usually puts *liart* for *albus, incanus*, &c.

Ver. 7164. thou olde very trate] So MSS. C. 1. Ask. 1. 2. and Ed. Ca. 2. The later Editt. read *viritrate* in one word. We may suppose *trate* to be used for *trot*, a common term for an old woman. Keysler, Antiq. Sept. p. 503. refers it to the same original with the German *Drud*, or *Drut; Saga.*

Ver. 7269. And now hath Sathanas, saith he] So MSS. C. 1. Ask. 1. 2. I have put these two lines in a parenthesis as *he* refers to the narrator, the Sompnour.

Ver. 7277. A twenty thousand] I have added A for the sake of the verse. Chaucer frequently prefixes it to Nouns of number. See ver. 10697.

And up they risen, wel a ten or twelve.

Ver. 7299. To trentals] *Un trentel*, Fr. was a service of thirty Masses, which were usually celebrated, upon as many different days, for the dead. Du Cange, in v. Trentale.

Ver. 7327. Askaunce that he wolde for hem preye] The Glossary interprets *ascaunce* to mean *askew, aside, sideways; in a side view;* upon what authority I know not. It will be better to examine the other passages in which the same word occurs, before we determine the sense of it. See ver. 16306.

Ascaunce that craft is so light to lere.

Tro. i. 285.

Ascaunce, lo! is this not wisely spoken?

Ibid. 292.

Ascaunce, what, may I not stonden here?

Lydg. Trag. fol. 136. b.

Ascaunce I am of maners most chaungeable.

In the first and last instance, as well as in the text, *ascaunce* seems to signify simply *as if; quasi.* In the two others it signifies a little more; *as if to say.* This latter signification may be clearly established from the third line, which in the Italian original (Filostrato di Boccaccio, l. i.) stands thus:

Quasi dicesse, e no ci si puo stare?

So that *ascaunce* is there equivalent to *quasi dicesse* in Italian.

As to the Etymology of this word I must confess myself more at a loss. I observe however that one of a similar form in the Teutonic has a similar signification. Alskacks; *Quasi, quasi vero.* Kilian. Our *as* is the same with *als.* Teut. and Sax. It is only a further corruption of *al so.* Perhaps therefore *ascaunce* may have been originally *als-kansse. Kansse* in Teut. is *Chance* Fr. and Eng.

I will just add, that this very rare phrase was also used, as I suspect, by the Author of the *Continuation of the Canterbury Tales*, first printed by Mr. Urry. *Prol.* ver. 361.

And al *ascaunce* she loved him wel, she toke him by the swere.

It is printed *a staunce.*

Ver. 7329. A Goddes kichel] "It was called a Goddes kichel, because Godfathers and Godmothers used com-

monly to give one of them to their Godchildren, when they asked blessing." Sp. And so we are to suppose a Goddes halfpeny, in ver. 7331, was called for the same reason, &c. But this is all *gratis dictum*, I believe. The phrase is French, and the true meaning of it is explained by M. de la Monnoye in a note upon the *Contes de B. D. Perierz*, t. ii. p. 107. *Belle serrure de Dieu*] Expression du petit peuple, qui raporte pieusement tout à Dieu.—Rien n'est plus commun dans la bouche des bonnes vieilles, que ces especes d'Hébraïsmes: *Il m'en coute un bel ecu de Dieu; Il ne me reste que ce pauvre enfant de Dieu; Donez moi une benite aumône de Dieu.*

Ver. 7442. fifty yere] See Du Cange, in v. SEMPECTÆ. Peculiar honours and immunities were granted by the Rule of St. Benedict to those Monks, *qui quinquaginta annos in ordine exegerant, quos annum jubilæum exegisse vulgo dicimus.* It is probable that some similar regulation obtained in the other Orders.

Ver. 7488. mendiants] In MS. A. it is *mendinants*, both here and below, ver. 7494. which reading, though not agreeable to analogy, is perhaps the true one, as I find the word constantly so spelled in the Stat. 12 R. II. c. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Ver. 7511. Jovinian] Against whom St. Jerome wrote; or, perhaps, the supposed Emperour of that name in the *Gesta Romanorum*, c. lix. whose story was worked up into a *Morality*, under the title of *L'orgueil et présomption de l'Empereur Jovinien*—à 19 personages. It was printed at Lions, 1581. 8vo. *sur une vieille copie.* Du Verdier, in v. JOVINIEN. The same story is told of a *Robert King of Sicily*, in an old English poem. MS. *Harl.* 1701. Mr. Warton has given large extracts from an Oxford MS. as I suppose, of the same poem. Hist. of Eng. Po. p. 184.

Ver. 7514. of ful gret reverence] The Editt. have changed this to *ful litel*; but the reading of the MSS. may stand, if it be understood ironically.

Ver. 7600. As saith Senek] This story is told by Seneca, *de Ird*, l. i. c. xvi. of Cn. Piso. It is also told of an Emperour Eraclius, *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. cxi.

Ver. 7623. Irous Cambyses] This story is also in Seneca, l. iii. c. xiv. It differs a little from one in Herodotus, l. iii.

Ver. 7637. Singeth *Placebo*] The allusion is to an Anthem in the Romish church, from Psalm cxvi. 9. which in the Vulgate stands thus: *Placebo Domino in regione vivorum.* Hence the *complacent* brother in the *Marchant's Tale* is called *Placebo.*

Ver. 7662. the river of Gisen] It is called *Gyndes* in Seneca, lib. cit. c. xxi. and in Herodotus, l. i.

Ver. 7666. That wimmen] So the best MSS. agreeably to the authors just quoted. The Editt. have—

That *men* might *ride and* wade &c.

Sir J. Mandevile tells the story of the Euphrates;—"because that he had sworn, that he sholde putte the ryvere in suche poynt, that a womman myghte wel passe there, withouten castynge of of hire clothes." p. 49.

Ver. 7710. the letter of our sele] There is a letter of this kind in Stevens, *Supp. to Dugd.* vol. ii. App. p. 370. *Fratres Prædicatores*, Warwicc. *admittunt* Thomam Cannings et uxorem ejus Agnetem *ad participationem omnium bonorum operum conventûs ejusdem.* It is under seal of the Prior, 4 Non. Octob. An. Dom. 1347.

Ver. 7740. The remainder of this tale is omitted in MSS. B. G. and Bod. β. and instead of it they give us the following *lame and impotent conclusion.*

He ne had nort ellis for his sermon
To part among his brethren when he cam home.
And thus is this tale idon.
For we were almost att the toun.

I only mention this to shew what liberties some Copyists have taken with our author.

Ver. 7879. Were newe spoused] It has been observed in n. upon ver. 812. that Chaucer frequently omits the governing Pronoun before his Verbs. The instances there cited were of Personal Pronouns. In this line and some others, which I shall point out here, the Relatives *who* or *which* are omitted in the same manner. See ver. 7411. 13035. 16049.

Ver. 7910. Lynyan] or *Linian.* The person meant was an eminent Lawyer, and made a great noise, as we say, in his time. His name of late has been so little known, that I believe nobody has been angry with the Editt. for calling him *Livian.* There is some account of him in Panzirolus, *de Cl. Leg. Interpret.* l. iii. c. xxv. Joannes, a *Lignano*, agri Mediolanensis vico, oriundus, et ob id *Lignanus* dictus &c. One of his works entitled, "*Tractatus de Bello*," is extant in MS. *Reg.* 13. B. ix. He compiled it at Bologna in the year 1360.

He was not however a mere Lawyer. Chaucer speaks of him as excelling also *in Philosophie*, and so does his epitaph, ap. Panzirol. l. c.

— — — — — —
Gloria Lignani, titulo decoratus utroque,
Legibus et sacro Canone dives erat,
Alter Aristoteles, Hippocras erat et Ptolomæus——

The only specimen of his Philosophy that I have met with is in MS. *Harl.* 1006. It is an Astrological work, entitled, "Conclusiones Judicii composite per Domnum Johannem *de Lyviano* (l. *Lyniano*) super coronacione Domni Urbani Pape VI. A. D. 1378. XVIII April, &c. cum Diagrammate." He also supported the election of Urban as a Lawyer. Panzirol. l. c. et Annal. Eccles. a Raynaldo, tom. xvii. He must therefore have lived at least to 1378, though in the printed epitaph he is said to have died in 1368, XVI Febr.

Ver. 7927. To Emelie ward] One of the regions of Italy was called Æmilia, from the *Via Æmilia*, which crossed it from Placentia to Rimini. Placentia stood upon the Po. Pitisc. Lex. Ant. Rom. in v. VIA ÆMILIA. Petrarch's description of this part of the course of the Po is a little different. He speaks of it as dividing the Æmilian and Flaminian regions from Venice—*Æmiliam atque Flaminiam Venetiamque discriminans.* But our Author's *Emelie* is plainly taken from him.

As the following Tale is almost wholly translated from Petrarch, (see the Discourse &c. §. xx.) it would be endless to cite particular passages from the original, especially as it is printed in all the Editions of Petrarch's works. It is there entitled, *De obedientiâ et fide uxoriâ Mythologia.*

Ver. 8136. The time of underne] The Glossary explains this rightly to mean *the third hour of the day, or nine of the clock.* In ver. 8357, where this word is used again, the original has—*hora tertia.* In this place it has—*hora prandii.* From whence we may collect that in Chaucer's time the *third hour*, or *underne*, was the usual hour of dinner.

I have never met with any Etymology of this word *underne*, but the following passage might lead one to suspect that it had some reference to *undernoon.* "In the town-book belonging to the Corporation of Stanford, 28 E. IV. it is ordeyned, that no person opyn ther sack, or set ther corn to sale afore Hour of Ten of the Bell, or els the Undernone Bell be rongyn." Peck's Desid. Cur. vol. i. B. vi. p. 36. In the Islandic Dict. *Ondverne* is rendered *Mane diei.*

Ver. 8258. ful of *nouches*] The common reading is *ouches*; but I have retained the reading of the best MSS. as it may possibly assist somebody to discover the meaning of the word. I observe too that it is so written in the Inventory of the effects of Henry V. Rot. Parl. 2 H. VI. n. 31. "Item 6 *Broches et nouches* d'or garniz de divers garnades pois 31^{d} d'or pris 35^{s}.

Ver. 8466. of Pavie] When the text of this tale was printed, I had not sufficiently adverted to the reading of the best MSS. which is uniformly *Panik.* I have little doubt that it should be *Panik* both here and below, ver. 8640. 8814. as in Petrarch the Marquisses sister is said to be married to the Count *de Panico.* In Boccace it is *de Panago.*

Ver. 8614. his message] His *messenger.* See below, ver.

8823. *Message* was commonly used for *Messager* by the French Poets. Du Cange, in v. MESSAGARIUS.

Ver. 8915. as ye han do *me*] For, *me*. This is one of the most licentious corruptions of Orthography, that I remember to have observed in Chaucer. All that can be said in excuse of him is that the old Poets of other countries have not been more scrupulous. Quadrio has a long chapter, L. ii. Dist. iv. cap. iv. upon the Licences taken by the Italian Poets, and especially Dante, the most licentious, as he says, of them all, *for the sake of Rime*. As long a chapter might easily be filled with the irregularities which the old French Poets committed for the same reason. It should seem, that, while Orthography was so variable, as it was in all the living European languages before the invention of Printing, the Poets thought it generally adviseable to sacrifice propriety of Spelling to exactness of Riming. Of the former offence there were but few judges; the latter was obvious to the eye of every reader.

Ver. 9064. Lest Chichevache] This excellent reading is restored upon the authority of the best MSS. instead of the common one, *Chechiface*. The allusion is to the subject of an old Ballad, which is still preserved in MS. *Harl.* 2251. fol. 270. b. It is a kind of Pageant, in which two Beasts are introduced, called *Bycorne* and *Chichevache*. The first is supposed to feed upon *obedient husbands*, and the other upon *patient wives*; and the humour of the piece consists in representing *Bicorne* as pampered with a superfluity of food, and *Chichevache* as half starved.

In Stowe's Catalogue of Lydgate's works, at the end of Speght's Edit. of Chaucer, there is one entitled "*of two monstrous beasts Bicorne and Chichefache*." It is not improbable that Lydgate translated the Ballad now extant from some older French Poem, to which Chaucer alludes. The name of *Chichevache* is French; *Vacca parca*.

Ver. 9080. aventaille] *The forepart of the armour*. Sk. He deduces it from *avant*. But *ventaille* was the common name for that aperture in a close helmet through which the wearer was to breathe, Nicot, in v; so that perhaps *aventaille* meant originally an helmet with such an aperture; *un heaume à ventaille*.

Ver. 9088. and wringe, and waille] Beside the MSS. C. 1. Ask. 1. 2. and others, we have the authority of both Caxton's Editt. for concluding the *Clerkes* Tale in this manner. I say nothing of the two Editt. by Pynson, as they are mere copies of Caxton's second. But I must not conceal a circumstance, which seems to contradict the supposition that the *Marchant's* Prologue followed immediately. In those same MSS. the following Stanza is interposed.

> This worthy Clerk whan ended was his tale,
> Our Hoste saide and swore by cockes bones,
> Me were lever than a barrel of ale
> My wif at home had herd this legend ones;
> This is a gentil tale for the nones,
> As to my purpos, wiste ye my wille,
> But thing that wol not be, let it be stille.

Whatever may be thought of the genuineness of these lines, they can at best, in my opinion, be considered as a fragment of an *unfinished* Prologue, which Chaucer might *once* have intended to place at the end of the *Clerkes* tale. When he determined to connect that tale with the *Marchant's* in another manner, he may be supposed, notwithstanding, to have left this Stanza for the present uncancelled in his MS. He has made use of the thought, and some of the lines, in the Prologue which connects the *Monkes* Tale with *Melibee*, ver. 13895—13900.

The two additional Stanzas, which were first printed in Ed. Urr. from MS. F. (H. 1. in Urry's List) and which serve to introduce the *Frankelein's* tale next to the *Clerkes*, are evidently, I think, spurious. They are not found, as I recollect, in any MS. except that cited by Mr. Urry and MS. B. If these two MSS. were of much greater age and authority than they really are, they would weigh but little in opposition to the number and character of those MSS. in which these Stanzas are wanting, and in which the *Marchant's* tale stands next to the *Clerkes*.

Another proof of the spuriousness of these Stanzas is, that they are almost entirely made up of lines taken from the Prologue, which in this Edition, upon the authority of the best MSS. is prefixed to the *Squieres* Tale. See below, ver. 10301.

Ver. 9172. Ne take no wif] What follows to ver. 9180 incl. is taken from the *Liber aureolus Theophrasti de nuptiis*, as quoted by Hieronymus, *contra Jovinianum*, and from thence by John of Salisbury, Polycrat. l. viii. c. xi. *Quod si propter dispensationem domus, et languoris solatia, et fugam solitudinis, ducuntur uxores, multo melius dispensat servus fidelis, &c. Assidere autem ægrotanti magis possunt amici et vernulæ beneficiis obligati quam illa, quæ nobis imputet lachrymas suas, &c.*

Ver. 9180. many a day] After this verse in the common Editt. are these two,

> And if thou take to thee a wife untrew
> Full oftentime it shall thee sore rew.

In MSS. A. C. and B. α. they stand thus—

> And if thou take a wif be wel ywar
> Of on perl thing which I declare ne dar.

In MSS. C. 1. HA. D. thus—

> And if thou take a wif of heye lynage
> She shal be hauteyn and of gret costage.

In MS. B. δ. thus—

> And if thou take a wif in thin age olde
> Ful lightly mayst thou be a cokewold.

In MSS. Ask. 1. 2. E. H. B. ζ. N. c. and both Caxton's Editt. they are entirely omitted, and so I believe they should be. If any one of these couplets should be allowed to be from the hand of Chaucer, it can only be considered as the opening of a new argument, which the author, for some reason or other, immediately abandoned, and consequently would have cancelled, if he had lived to publish his work.

Ver. 9236. Lo how that Jacob] The same instances are quoted in *Melibeus*, p. 83.

Ver. 9250. As saith Senek] In Marg. C. 1. Sicut nihil est superius benigna conjuge, ita nihil est crudelius infesta muliere. Seneca.

Ver. 9251. as Caton *bif*] i. e. biddeth. See the n. on ver. 187. The line referred to is quoted in Marg. C. 1.

> Uxoris linguam, si frugi est, ferre memento.

It is in L. iii. Dist. 25.

Ver. 9259. If thou lovest thyself] The allusion is to Ephes. v. 28. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself. The MSS. read—If thou lovest thyself *thou lovest* thy wif—which, I think, is certainly wrong. I have printed, from conjecture only—*love thou thy wif*. But upon reconsidering the passage, I think it may be brought still nearer to the Apostles doctrine by writing—Thou lovest thyself, *if* thou lovest thy wif.

Ver. 9298. Wades bote] Upon this Mr. Speght remarks as follows: "Concerning Wade and his bote called Guingelot, as also his straunge exploits in the same, because the matter is long and fabulous, I pass it over."—*Tantamne rem tam negligenter?* Mr. Speght probably did not foresee, that Posterity would be as much obliged to him for a little of this *fabulous matter* concerning *Wade* and his *bote*, as for the gravest of his annotations. The story of *Wade* is mentioned again by our author in his Troilus, iii. 615.

> He songe, she playede, he tolde a *tale of Wade*.

It is there put proverbially for any *romantic history*; but the allusion in the present passage to *Wades bote* can hardly be explained, without a more particular knowledge of his adventures, than we are now likely ever to attain.

Ver. 9348. disputison] *Disputation*. So ver. 11202. 15244. See Gower, *Conf. Am.* fol. 15. b.

> In great *desputeson* they were.

and fol. 150. b. 151. b.

Ver. 9409. A chidester] So MS. A. See the note on ver. 9019.

Ver. 9410. a man is wood] In MS. A. *mannisheweed*; in C. 1. *mannish wood*.

Ver. 9594. Ne he Theodomas] This person is mentioned again as a famous trumpeter in the H. of F. iii. 156. but upon what authority I really do not know. I should suspect that our author met with him, and the anecdote alluded to, in some *Romantic History* of Thebes.

He is prefixed to proper names emphatically, according to the Saxon usage. See before, ver. 9242. *him* Holofernes; ver. 9247. *him* Mardochee: and below, ver. 9608.

Of *hire* Philologie and *him* Mercury.

Ver. 9652. As that she bare it] As this line is not only in all the best MSS. but also in Edit. Ca. 2. it seems very extraordinary that the later Editions should have exchanged it for the following.

So fresh she was and thereto so licand.

Ver. 9658. his service bedeth] *Profereth*. So this word is explained in another passage, ver. 16533.

Lo, how this thefe coude *his service bede!*
Ful soth it is, that *swiche profered service*
Stinketh, as witnessen thise olde wise.

See also ver. 8236.

Ver. 9659. false of holy hewe] I have added *of*, from conjecture. See below, ver. 12355. *under hewe Of holinesse*.

Ver. 9681. vernage] *Vernaccia* ITAL. "Credo sic dictum (says Skinner) quasi *Veronaccia*, ab agro *Veronensi*, in quo optimum ex hoc genere vinum crescit." But the Vernage, whatever may have been the reason of its name, was probably a wine of Crete, or of the neighbouring continent. Froiss. v. iv. c. 18. De l'isle de Candie il leur venoit tresbonnes *malvoisies* et grenaches (r. *gernaches*) dont ils estoient largement servis et confortez. Our author in another place, ver. 13000, 1. joins together the wines of *Malvesie* and *Vernage*. Malvasia was a town upon the eastern coast of the Morea, near the site of the ancient Epidaurus Limera, within a small distance from Crete.

Ver. 9684. Dan Constantine] *Dan*, a corruption of *Dominus*, was a title of honour usually given to Monks, as *Dom* and *Don* still are in France and Spain. See below, ver. 13935.

Whether shal I call you my lord *Dan* John,
Or *Dan* Thomas, or elles *Dan* Albon?

Dan Constantine, according to Fabric. Bibl. Med. Æt. t. 1. p. 423. Ed. Pat. 4to. wrote about the year 1080. His works, including the treatise mentioned in the text, were printed at Basil, 1536. fol.

Ver. 9690. And they han don] This line has also been left out of the later Editt. though it is in all the best MSS. and in Edit. Ca. 2. To supply its place the following line—

So hasted Januarie it must be don—

has been inserted after ver. 9691. and the four lines have been made to rime together by adding *sone* at the end of ver. 9689.

Let volden all this hous in curteis wise *sone*.

Ver. 9714. Ne hurt himselven] In the *Persones Tale* we have a contrary doctrine. "God wote, a man may slee himself with his owen knif, and make himself dronken of his owen tonne," p. 166.

Ver. 9761. In ten of Taure] The greatest number of MSS. read, *two*, *tuo*, *too*, or *to*. But the time given (*foure days complete*, ver 9767.) is not sufficient for the Moon to pass from the 2d degree of Taurus into Cancer. The mean daily motion of the Moon being = 13° 10′ 35″. her motion in 4 days is = 1s. 22°. 42′. or not quite 53 degrees; so that, supposing her to set out from the 2d of Taurus, she would not, in that time, be advanced beyond the 25th degree of Gemini. If she set out from the 10th degree of Taurus, as I have corrected the text, she might properly enough be said, in four days, to be *glided into* Cancer.

Ver. 9888. a dogge for the bowe] a dog *used in shooting*. See before, ver. 6951.

Ver 9967. so brenningly] Vulg. *benignly*. MSS. Ask. 1. 2. read, *fervently*; which is probably a gloss for the true word, *brenningly*. See before, ver. 1566. MS. A. reads, *benyngly*.

Ver. 9983. For as good is] The reading in the text is from MS. Ask. 1. MS. A. reads thus:

For as good is al blind deceived be.

I should not dislike

For as good is al blind deceived *to* be,
As be deceived, whan a man may see.

Ver. 10000. What sleight is it] These lines are a little different in MSS. C. 1. HA.

What sleighte is it, *though it* be long and hote,
That *love* n'il find it out in som manere?

Ver. 10104. Which that he ravisshed out of Ethna] So MS. A. In some other MSS. *Ethna*, by a manifest error of the copyist, has been changed into *Proserpina*. The passage being thus made nonsense, other transcribers left out the line, and substituted this in its stead.

"Eche after other right as ony line."

Ver. 10121. Among a thousand] Ecclesiastes vii. 28. This argument is treated in much the same manner in Melibeus, p. 108—109.

Ver. 10153. The Romain gestes] He means the collection of stories called *Gesta Romanorum*; of which I once thought to say a few words here, in order to recommend it to a little more attention than it has hitherto met with from those who have written upon the poetical inventions of the middle ages; but as many of the stories in that collection are taken from a treatise of Petrus Alphonsus, *De Clericali disciplinâ*, an older and still more forgotten work, I shall reserve what I have to offer upon this subject till I come to the *Tale of Melibeus*, p. 108. where *Piers Alphonse* is quoted.

Ver. 10227. Gan pullen] After this verse, the Editt. (except Ca. 2. and Pyns. 1. 2.) have eight others of the lowest and most superfluous ribaldry that can well be conceived. It would be a mere loss of time to argue from the lines themselves, that they were not written by Chaucer, as we have this short and decisive reason for rejecting them, that they are not found in any one MS. of authority. They are not found in MSS. A. C. 1. Ask. 1. 2. HA. B. C. D. G. Bod. α. ε. γ. δ. ι. ζ. C. 2. T. N. Ch. In MSS. E. H. I. W. either the whole tale, or that part where they might be looked for, is wanting. The only tolerable MS. in which I have seen them is F. and there they have been added in the margin, by a later hand, perhaps not older than Caxton's first Edit.

Ver. 10240. Out! helpe!] Two lines, which follow this in the common Editt. are omitted for the reasons stated in the note upon ver. 10227. And I shall take the same liberty, upon exactly the same grounds, with four more, which have been inserted in those Editt. after ver. 10250.

Ver. 10241. O stronge lady store] As all the best MSS. support this reading, I have not departed from it, for fear *store* should have some signification that I am not aware of. Some MSS. have *stowre*. MS. G. *houre*. Edit. Ca. 2. *hore*. Hóra, *meretrix*. ISLAND.

Ver. 10261. Ye mase, ye masen] The final *n* has been added without authority, and unnecessarily. This line is very oddly written in MSS. Ask. 1. 2.

Ya may ya may ya quod she.

Ver. 10293. It has been said in the Discourse &c. §. xxiii. that this new Prologue has been prefixed to the Squieres tale *upon the authority of the best* MSS. They are, as follows; A. C. 1. Ask. 1. 2. HA. D. Bod. α. γ. δ. The concurrence of the first five MSS. would alone have been more than sufficient to outweigh the authorities in favour of the other Prologue. Edit. Ca. 2. (though it has not this Prologue) agrees with these MSS. in placing the Squieres tale *after* the Marchants.

Ver. 10298. weive] This verb is generally used transi-

tively; to *wave*, to *relinquish* a thing. But it has also a neuter signification; to *depart*; as here. See also ver. 4728. 9357.

Ver. 10312. Sin women connen utter] MS. A. reads, *oute*; but others have *utter*; which I believe is right, though I confess that I do not clearly understand the passage. The phrase has occurred before, ver. 6103.

With danger *uttren* we all our *chaffare*.

Ver. 10344. Of whiche the eldest sone] I have added *sone*, for the sake of the metre.

Ver. 10364. and in *his* mansion] *His* refers to Mars, and not to the Sun. "*Aries est l'exaltation du Soleil ou* xix. *degre. et si est Aries* maison de Mars." *Calend. des Berg.* Sign. I. ult. Leo was the *Mansion of the Sun*. Ibid. Sig. K. 1. Aries is there also said to be *signe chault et sec*.

Ver. 10381. strange sewes] A sewer was an officer so called from his placing the dishes upon the table. *Asseour*, Fr. from *asseoir*, to place. In the establishment of the King's household there are still four *Gentlemen Sewers*. *Sewes* here seem to signify *dishes*, from the same original; as *assiette* in Fr. still signifies a *little dish*, or *plate*. See Gower, *Conf. Am.* fol. 115. b.

The fleshe, whan it was so to-hewe,
She taketh, and maketh therof a *sewe*—

Ver. 10382. heronsewes] *Heronçeaux*. Fr. according to the Glossary. At the Intronization of Archbp. Nevil, 6 Edward IV. there were *Heronshawes* iiii C. Lel. Collect. vol. vi. 2. At another feast in 1530 we read of "16 *Heronsews*, every one 12d." Peck's D. C. vol. ii. 12.

Ver. 10509. a gentil Poileis courser] A horse of *Apulia*, which in old Fr. was usually called *Poille*. The horses of that country were much esteemed. MS. *Bod.* James vi. 142. Richard, Archbp. of Armagh, in the xivth Century, says in praise of our St. Thomas, "quod nec mulus Hispaniæ, nec *dextrarius Apuliæ*, nec repedo Æthiopiæ, nec elephantus Asiæ, nec camelus Syriæ hoc asino nostro Angliæ aptior sive audentior invenitur ad prælia." He had before informed his audience, that *Thomas*, Anglice, idem est quod *Thom. Asinus*. There is a Patent in Rymer, 2 E. II. *De dextrariis* in Lumbardiâ *emendis*.

Ver. 10523. the Grekes hors Sinon] This is rather an awkward expression for—*the horse of Sinon the Greek*; or, as we might say, *Sinon the Greek's horse*.

Ver. 10546. Alhazen and Vitellon] *Alhazeni et Vitellonis Opticæ* are extant, printed at Basil, 1572. The first is supposed by his Editor to have lived about A. D. 1100, and the second to A. D. 1270.

Ver. 10561. Canacees] This word should perhaps have had an accent on the first e—Canacées, to shew that it is to be pronounced as of four syllables. So also below, ver. 10945.

And swouneth eft in Canacées barme.

Ver. 10570. yknowen it so ferne] *Known* it so *before*. I take *ferne* to be a corruption of *forne* (foran, Sax.). So in Tro. v. 1176. *ferne yere* seems to signify *former years*. In P. P. fol. lxxx. b. *ferne ago* is used as *long ago*.

Ver. 10583. chambre of paremente] *Chambre de parement*, is translated by Cotgrave, the presence-chamber; and *Lit de parement*, a bed of state. *Parements* originally signified all sorts of ornamental furniture, or clothes, from *parer*, Fr. to adorn. See ver. 2503. and Leg. of G. W. Dido, ver. 181.

To dauncing chambres, ful of paremente,
Of riche beddes and of pavementes,
This Eneas is ledde after the mete.

The Italians have the same expression. Ist. d. Conc. Trident. l. iii. Il Pontefice—ritornato alla *camera de' paramenti* co' Cardinali—.

Ver. 10587. in the fish] See the note on ver. 6284.

Ver. 10660. Til that wel nigh] *That* has been added for the sake of the metre. We might read with some MSS.

Til wel nigh the day began for to spring.

Ver. 10663. That mochel drinke, and labour] So MSS. C. 1. HA. In MS. A. it is, *That mirthe and labour*. In Ask. l. 2. *That after moche labour*. In several other MSS. and Editt. Ca. 1. 2. *That moche mete and labour*. We must search further, I apprehend, for the true reading.

Ver. 10666. bloud in domination] V. Lib. Galeno adscr. de natura &c. Ed. Charter. T. V. p. 327. Sanguis dominatur horis septem ab hora noctis nona ad horam diei tertiam.

Ver. 10742. A faucon peregrine] This species of Falcon is thus described in the *Tresor de Brunet Latin*, P. 1. Ch. *Des Faucons*. MS. *Reg.* 19. C. X. "La seconde lignie est *faucons*, qui hom apele *pelerins*, par ce que nus ne trove son ni. ains est pris autresi come en *pelerinage*. et est mult legiers, a norrir, et mult cortois, et vaillans, et de bone maniere." Chaucer adds, that this Falcon was of *fremde*, or *fremed*, *lond*; from a *foreign country*.

Ver. 10749. leden] *Language*, Sax. a corruption of *Latin*. Dante uses *Latino* in the same sense. Canz. 1.

E cantine gli augelli
Ciascuno in suo latino.

Ver. 10840. *crowned* malice] The reader of taste will not be displeased, I trust, at my having received this reading upon the authority of MS. A. only. The common reading is *cruel*.

Ver. 10921. thilke text] Boethius, l. iii. met. 2.

Repetunt proprios quæque recursus,
Redituque suo singula gaudent—

which our author has thus translated: "All thynges seken ayen to hir propre course, and all thynges rejoysen on hir retourninge agayne to hir nature." The comparison of the Bird is taken from the same place.

Ver. 10958. velouettes blew] *Velvets*, from the Fr. *Velou*, *Velouette*. See Du Cange, in v. Villosa, Velluetum. See Saintré, t. iii. p. 664.

I will just add, that as *blew* was the colour of *truth* (see C.L. ver. 248) so *green* belonged to *inconstancy*. Hence in a *Ballade upon an inconstant lady* (among Stowe's Additions to Chaucer's works, p. 551. Ed. Urry), the burden is—

Instede of blew thus may ye were al grene.

Ver. 10962. thise tidifes] The tidife is mentioned as an inconstant bird in the Leg. of G. W. ver. 154.

As doth the *tidif* for newefangelnesse.

Skinner supposes it to be the *Titmouse*; but he produces no authority for his supposition; nor have I any to oppose to it.

Ver. 10963, 4. are transposed from the order in which they stand in all the Editt. and MSS. that I have seen. Some of the best MSS. however read—*And* pies—which rather countenances the transposition. My only excuse for such a liberty must be, that I cannot make any good sense of them in the common order.

Ver. 10977, 8. are also transposed; but upon the authority of MSS. A. C. 1, and, I believe, some others; though, being satisfied of the certainty of the emendation, I have omitted to take a note of their concurrence. Ed. Ca. 2. agrees with those MSS. According to the common arrangement, old Cambuscan is to *win Theodora to his wif*, and we are not told what is to be the object of Algarsif's adventures.

Ver. 10981. of Camballo] MS. A. reads *Caballo*. But that is not my only reason for suspecting a mistake in this name. It seems clear from the context, that the person here intended is not *a brother*, but *a lover* of Canace,

Who fought in listes with *the brethren two*
For Canace, or that he might hire *winne*.

The brethren two are, obviously, the two brethren of Canace, who have been mentioned above, Algarsif and Camballo. In MSS. Ask. 1. 2. it is—*hir brethren two*; which would put the matter out of all doubt. Camballo coud not fight with himself.

Again, if this Camballo be supposed to be the brother of Canace, and to fight in defence of her with some two

brethren, who might be suitors to her, according to Spenser's fiction, he coud not properly be said to *winne* his sister, when he only prevented others from winning her.

The outline therefore of the unfinished part of this tale, according to my idea, is nearly this; the conclusion of the story of the *Faucon*,

"By mediation of *Cambalhus*,"

with the help of *the Ring*; the conquests of *Cambuscan*; the winning of Theodora by *Algarsif*, with the assistance of *the horse of brass*; and the marriage of Canace to *some knight*, who was first obliged to fight for her with her two brethren; a method of courtship very consonant to the spirit of antient Chivalry.

Ver. 10984. and ther I left] After this verse, in MS. C. 1. and others, is the following note: "Here endeth the Squieres tale as meche as Chaucer made." The two lines, which in the Editt. and some MSS. are made to begin a third part, are wanting in all the best MSS.

"Apollo whirleth up his chare so hie
Til that the god Mercurius house the alle."

They certainly have not the least appearance of belonging to this place. I should guess that they were originally scribbled by some vacant reader in the blank space, which is commonly left at the end of this tale, and afterwards transcribed, as Chaucer's, by some copyist of more diligence than sagacity.

Ver. 10985. In faith, Squier] The authorities for giving this Prologue to the Frankelein, and for placing his tale next to the Squieres, are MSS. A. Ask. 1. 2. HA. Bod. α. γ. In MS. C. 1. there is a blank of near two pages at the end of the Squieres tale, but the Frankelein's tale follows, beginning at ver. 11066. This arrangement isalso supported by Ed. Ca. 2. For the rest, see the Discourse, &c. §. xxv.

Ver. 11021. Thise olde gentil Bretons] Of the collection of *British Lays* by *Marie* something has been said in the Discourse &c. n. 24. I will here only quote a few passages from that collection, to shew how exactly Chaucer and she agree in their manner of speaking of the Armorican bards. The Lay of *Elidus* concludes thus: MS. *Harl.* 978. fol. 181.

De l'aventure de ces treis
Li *auntien Bretun curteis*
Firent li lai pur remembrer,
Qe hum nel deust pas oblier.

The Lay of *Guiguemar* thus: fol. 146.

De cest cunte, ke oi avez,
Fu Guiguemar le lai trovez,
Q'hum fait *en harpe* e *en rote*,
Dont est a oir la note.

The Lay of *Chevrefoil* begins fol. 171.

Asez me plest, e bien le voil,
Du lai qe hum nume chevrefoil
Q'la verite vus encunt,
Pur quoi il fu fet e dunt.
Plusurs le me unt *cunte e dit*,
E jeo l'ai trove *en escrit*,
De Tristram e de la reine,
De lur amur qui tant fu fine,
Dunt il eurent meinte dolur,
Puis mururent en un jur.

In one particular Chaucer goes further, as I remember, than *Marie*, when he says, that these Lays were

"Rimeyed in hir firste Breton tonge,"

if *rimeyed* be understood to mean *written in Rime*. But it may very well signify only *versified*. Indeed the Editor of the *Dictionnaire de la langue Bretonne* by Dom Pelletier seems to doubt, whether the Armorican language be capable of any sort of poetical harmony. "Nous ne voyons pas que nos Bretons Armoricains ayent cultivée la poësie; et la langue telle qu'ils la parlent, ne paroit pas pouvoir se plier à la mesure, à la douceur et à la harmonie des vers." Pref. p. ix. A strange doubt in him, who might have found in the Dictionary, which he has published, quotations from two Armorican poems, viz. *les propheties de Gwinglaff* and *la destruction de Jerusalem*, both in Rime. See *Arabat. Bagat.* And he himself speaks in the same preface, p. viii. of *la vie de S. Gwenolé, premier Abbé de Landevenec, écrite en vers.* The oldest MS. however now known in the language, according to his account, is that containing *les propheties de Gwinglaff*, written in 1450.

Ver. 11113. Not fer fro Penmark] The best MSS. have blundered in this name. They write it *Pedmark*. But MSS. Bod. α. e. and Ed. Ca. 2. have it right—*Penmark*. The later Editt. have changed it ridiculously enough into *Denmark*.

Penmark is placed in the maps upon the western coast of Bretagne between Brest and Port L'Orient. Walsingham mentions a descent of the English in 1403, *apud Penarch* (r. Penmarch) p. 369. See Lobineau, H. de Bret. t. i. p. 503. In the same history, *de Penmarc* occurs very frequently as a family-name. The etymology of the word, from Pen (*caput, mons*) and Mark (*limes, regio*) is evidently British.

Ver. 11120. Cairrud] This word is also of British original, signifying *the Red city*; as *Cair guent* in this island signified *the White city*. Arviragus is a known British name from the time of Juvenal.

Ver. 11127. Dorigene] Droguen, or Dorguen, was the name of the wife of Alain I. Lobineau, t. i. p. 70. See also the index to t. ii.

Ver. 11250. Aurelius] This name, though of Roman original, was common, we may presume, among the Britons. One of the princes mentioned by Gildas was called *Aurelius Conanus*. Another British king is named *Aurelius Ambrosius* by Geffrey of Monmouth. It may be remarked of this last author, that although he has not paid the least regard to truth in his narration of facts, he has been very attentive to probability in his names both of persons and places.

Ver. 11262. as doth a furie in helle] It is "a fire," in MSS. C. 1. Ask. 1. 2. HA. which, perhaps, ought to have been followed: though I cannot say that I well understand either of the readings. *Fury* and *fuyr* have been confounded before, ver. 2686.

Ver. 11317. Is ther non other grace] I have inserted these two lines in this place upon the authority of MS. A. supported by MSS. E. Bod. ζ. They have usually been placed after ver. 11310.

Ver. 11422. Pamphilus for Galathee] Mr. Urry, misled by his classical learning, has altered this most licentiously—

"Than *Polyphemus* did for Galathee."

But the allusion is plainly to the first lines of a Latin Poem, which was very popular in the time of Chaucer, in which one *Pamphilus* gives a history of his amour with *Galatea*.

The poem begins thus: MS. *Cotton.* Titus A. xx.

Liber Pamphili.
Vulneror et clausum porto sub pectore telum,
Crescit et assidue plaga dolorque mihi.
Et ferientis adhuc non audeo dicere nomen,
Nec sinit aspectus plaga videre suos.

This poem, by the name of *Pamphilus*, is quoted in our author's Melibeus, p. 116. It is extant in MS. in many libraries, and it has also been printed more than once. Leyser. Hist. Poet. Medii Ævi, p. 2071. (1171.) Catal. Gaignat. n. 2233, 2234.

Ver. 11453. tregetoures] The profession of a *Joculator* or *Juggler*, was anciently very comprehensive, as appears from this passage of the *Breviari d'Amors*. See the Discourse &c. n. 25.

Altressi peccan *li joglar*,
Que ssabo *cantar* e *balar*,
E ssabo *tocar estrumens*,
O ssabon *encantar* las gens,
O ffar autra joglayria —

In the time of Chaucer, the persons who exercised the first mentioned branches of the art were called, generally *Minstrels*; and the name of *Jogelour* was, in a manner, appropriated to those, who, by sleight of hand and

machines, produced such illusions of the senses as are usually supposed to be effected by enchantment: see above, ver. 7049. This species of *Jogelour* is here called a *Tregetour*. They are joined together in company with Magicians. H. of F. iii. 169.

> Ther saw I playing *Jogelours*,
> *Magiciens* and *Tragetours*,
> And Philtonesses, Charmeresses—
> And Clerkes eke which conne wel
> All this *magike naturell*.——

See also the following ver. 187—191.

If we compare the feats of the *Tregetours*, as described in this passage, with those which are afterwards performed by the Clerkes *magike*, for the entertainment of his guests, ver. 11501—11519, we shall find them very similar; and they may both be illustrated by the following account which Sir John Mandevile has given of the exhibitions before the *Grete Chan*. "And than comen *Jogulours* and *Enchantoures*, that don many marvaylles: for they maken to come in the ayr the Sonne and the Mone, be seminge, to every mannes sight. And after they maken the nyght so derk, that no man may see no thing. And aftre they maken the day to come ayen fair and plesant with bright Sonne to every mannes sight. And than they bringen in *daunces* of the fairest damyselles of the world and richest arrayed. And aftre they maken to comen in other damyselles, bringinge coupes of gold, fulle of mylk of dyverse bestes, and yeven drynke to lordes and to ladyes. And than they make *Knyghtes to jousten* in armes fulle lustyly; and they rennen togidre a gret randoum; and they frusschen togidere fulle fiercely; and they breken here speres so rudely, that the tronchouns flen in sprotes and peces alle aboute the Halle. And than they make to come in *huntyng* for the Hert and for the Boor, with houndes renning with open mouthe. And many other thinges they don be craft of hir enchauntementes, that it is marveyle for to see. And suche playes of desport they make, til the taking up of the boordes." Mand. Trav. p. 285, 6. See also p. 261. "and wher it be by craft or by nygromancye, I wot nere."

The Glossary derives *Tregetour* from the Barb. Lat. *Tricator*; but the derivatives of that family are *tricheur*, *tricherie*, trick, &c. Nor can I find the word *Tregetour* in any language but our own. It seems clearly to be formed from *treget*, which is frequently used by Chaucer for *deceit*, *imposture*. R. R. 6367. 6312. 6325. and so is *tregetry*, ibid. 6374. 6382. From whence *treget* itself may have been derived is more difficult to say; but I observe, that *trebuchet*, the French name for a military engine, is called by Chaucer *trepeget*. R. R. 6279. and by Knighton, 2672. *trepget*; and that this same word *trebuchet*, in French, signified also a machine *for catching birds*. Du Cange, in v. Trepget. Hinc appellatio mansit apud nos instrumentis, aut machinulis, suspensis et lapsilibus, ad captandas aviculas. Has enim etiamnum *trebuchets* appellamus. Muratori, in his Antiq. Med. Æ. Diss. xxvi. p. 473, informs us, that *trabocchello*, or *trabocchetto*, in Italian (which he explains to be the same as *trebuchet* in French) signified also another instrument of fraud, which he describes thus: Sæculis Italiæ turbatissimis—in usu fuere teterrima insidiarum loca, id est, in cubiculis pavimentum perforatum, ac lineâ tabulâ (*Ribalta* appellabant) ita caute cooperatum, ut qui improvide alteram tabulæ partem pedibus premeret, cedente ipsa in ima rueret. This was clearly a species of *trap-door*. The reader will judge whether the *Tregetour* may not possibly have been so called from his frequent use of these insidious machines in his operations.

That a great deal of machinery was requisite to produce the *apparences*, or illusions, enumerated by Chaucer in this passage, is very certain; but not long after the art of a *Tregetour* seems to have been reduced to that of a modern *Juggler*, mere sleight of hand. In Lydgate's translation of *The Dance of Macabre*, MS. Harl. 116. he has introduced a *Tregitour* speaking thus:

> What may availe mankynde [f. magike] naturale,
> Or any crafte shewed by apparence,
> Or course of sterres above celestiale,
> Or of heven all the influence,
> Ayenst deth to stand at defence?
> *Lygarde de mayne* now helpith me right nought.
> Farewell my craft and all such sapience,
> For deth hath more maistries than I have wrought.

He has also the following speech of Death to a famous *Tregitour*:

> *Maister John Rykell*, somtime *Tregitour*
> Of nob'e Henri kinge of Englelond,
> And of France the mighty conquerour,
> For all the sleightes and turnyng of thyne honde,
> Thou must come nere this dance to understonde:
> Nought may avail all thy conclusions,
> For deth shortly, nother on see nor londe,
> Is not dysceyved by noon illusions.

Ver. 11567. And nowel crieth] *Noël*, in French, is derived from *Natalis*, and signified originally a cry of joy at Christmas, *le jour natal de notre Seigneur*. Menage in v. Noel. It was afterwards the usual cry of the people upon all occasions of joy and festivity. Hist. de Charles VII. par Chartier, p. 3. at the proclamation of Henry VI. fut crié sur la fosse de son pere à haute voix, Vive le Roy Henry, Roy de France et d'Angleterre; et avec cela fut crié *Noël*, des assistans, confortans lesdits Anglois.

Ver. 11585. His tables Toletanes] The Astronomical Tables, composed by order of Alphonso X, king of Castile, about the middle of the xiiith Century, were called sometimes *Tabulæ Toletanæ*, from their being adapted to the city of Toledo. There is a very elegant copy of them in MS. Harl. 3647. I am not sufficiently skilled in the ancient Astronomy to add any thing to the explanation of the following technical terms, drawn chiefly from those tables, which has been given in the Addit. to Gloss. Urr. v. Expans yeres, p. 81.

Ver. 11679. thise stories bere witnesse] They are all taken from Hieronymus contra Jovinianum, l. i. c. 39.

Ver. 11766. To alle wives] After this verse the two following are found in several MSS.

> The same thing I say of Bilia,
> Of Rhodogone and of Valeria.

But as they are wanting in MSS. A. C. 1. Ask. 1. 2. HA. I was not unwilling to leave them out.

Ver. 11802. She n'olde] After this verse Ed. Ca. 2. has the six following:

> Peraventure an hepe of you I wis
> Will holden him a lewed man in this,
> That he woll put his wife in jeopardie.
> Herkneth the tale, er ye upon him crie.
> She may have better fortune than you semeth;
> And whan that ye han herde the tale demeth.

These lines are more in the style and manner of Chaucer than interpolations generally are; but as I do not remember to have found them in any MS. I coud not receive them into the text. I think too, that, if they were written by him, he would probably, upon more mature consideration, have suppressed them, as unnecessarily anticipating the catastrophe of the tale.

Ver. 11807. As she was *boun*] *Ready*. This old word is restored from MSS. A. Ask. 1. 2. See P. L. p. 256. 291.

Ver. 11926. Which was the moste free] The same question is stated in the conclusion of Boccace's Tale. *Philoc.* l. v. Dubitasi ora qual di costoro fusse maggior liberalità &c. The Queen determines in favour of the husband.

Ver. 11929. Ye, let that passen] I have said all that I have to say, in favour of this Prologue to the Doctour's tale, in the Discourse &c. §. xxviii. It is only found in MS. A. In MSS. C. 1. HA. the following note is at the end of the Frankelein's tale: "Here endeth the Fr. T. and biginneth the Phisiciens tale without a Prologe."

Ver. 11993. For wine and youthe] The context, I think, requires that we should read,

> For wine and *slouthe* don Venus encrese.

He is giving the reason, why she avoided *Slogardie*, and did not permit Bacchus to have maistrie of hire mouth; because wine and slouthe encrease the amorous inclina-

tions, as oil and grese do fire. I can make no sense of *youthe*, or *thoughte*, as some MSS. read.

Ver. 12051. The doctour] Over against this line in the margin of MS. C. 1. is written "Augustinus;" which means, I suppose, that this description of Envy is taken from S. Austin. But I doubt whether Chaucer meant to quote that Saint by the title of The doctour. It rather seems to be an idle parenthesis like that, ver. 7269.

Ver. 12074. a cherl] So the best MSS. and Ed. Ca. 2. The common Editt. have *client*. In the *Rom. de la R.* where this story is told, ver. 5815—5894, Claudius is called *Sergent* of Appius: and accordingly Chaucer a little lower, ver. 12204. calls him "servant—unto—Appius."

In the Discourse &c. § xxix. I forgot to mention the *Rom. de la Rose* as one of the sources of this tale; though, upon examination, I find that our author has drawn more from thence, than from either Gower or Livy.

Ver. 12159. For love] Rom. de la R. 5871.

> Car *par amour et sans haïne*
> A sa belle fille Virgine
> Tantost a *la teste coupée*,
> Et puis *au Juge presentée*
> Devant tous *en plain Consistoire*,
> Et le Juge, selon l'hystoire,
> Le commanda tantost à prendre———

See below, v. 12190—3. The speeches of Virginius and his daughter are of Chaucer's own invention.

Ver. 12190. See P. L. 18.

Ver. 12233. Of bothe yeftes] This line is restored from MSS. C. 1. HA. It had been supplied in the common copies by the following:

> But hereof wol I not proceed as now.

Ver. 12236. a pitous tale] This is the reading of two good MSS. A. and HA. but I believe it to be a gloss. The other copies read *ermeful*, which is near the truth. It should be *ermeful*. Earme, Sax. signifies *miser*. Hence earmelice, *miserè*. Chr. Sax. 63. earmthe, *miseria*, ibid. 141. And a little lower, ver. 12246, *to erme* is used for *to grieve* as the Sax. earmian is, Chr. Sax. 188. 14.

Ver. 12239. thy jordanes] This word is in Walsingham, p. 288. "duæ ollæ, quas *Jordanes* vocamus, ad ejus collum colligantur." This is part of the punishment of a pretended *Phisicus et astrologus*, who had deceived the people by a false prediction. Hollinshed calls them *two jorden pots*, p. 440.

Ver. 12240. Thin ypocras] *Ypocras*, or *Hippocras*, and *Galianes*, should both have been printed, as proper names, with great initial letters. See the note on ver. 433.

Ver. 12245. Said I not wel?] All the best MSS. agree in giving this phrase to the Host in this place. It must remind us of the similar phrase, *said I well?* which occurs so frequently in the mouth of Shakespeare's *Host of the Garter*; and may be sufficient, with the other circumstances of general resemblance, to make us believe, that Shakespeare, when he drew that character, had not forgotten his Chaucer.

Ver. 12279. To saffron] So MS. A. and Ed. Ca. 2. I have preferred it to the common reading *savor*, as more expressive, and less likely to have been a gloss. Saffron was used to give colour as well as flavour.

The next lines are thus read in MSS. C. 1. Ask. 1. 2. HA.

> In every village and in every toun,
> This is my teme, and shal and ever was;
> *Radix malorum est cupiditas.*
> Than shew I forth, &c.

And perhaps I ought to have followed them.

Ver. 12297. Fasting ydrinken] The prepositive particle *y* has been added for the sake of the metre.

Ver 12340. gon a blake beried] So all the MSS. I think, except Ask. 2. which reads "on blake be ryed." Skinner explains *blakeberied* to mean *in nigras et inauspicatas domos missus*. I really cannot guess what it means

Ver. 12341. For certes] See R. R. ver. 5763.

> For oft gode predicacioun
> Cometh of evil entencioun.

Ver. 12409. Hem thought the Jewes] The same thought is repeated in the Persones Tale, p. 159.

Ver. 12411. tombesteres] *Women-dancers*, from the Sax. *tumban*, to dance. He uses the word again in the Test. of L. B. 2. The Editt. read *tomblesteres*; which is a later word, formed, like our *tumbler*, from *tumbelan*, the frequentative of *tumban*.

With respect to the termination in *stere*, see the note on ver. 2019. and in the next line *fruitesteres* are to be understood to be *female sellers of fruit*.

Ver. 12417. The holy writ] In marg. C. 1. Nolite inebriari vino, in quo est luxuria.

Ver. 12426. Seneca] Perhaps he refers to Epist. LXXXIII. Extende in plures dies illum ebrii habitum: nunquid de furore dubitabis? nunc quoque non est minor sed brevior.

Ver. 12442. For while that Adam] At this line, the margin of MS. C. 1. quotes Hieronym. c. Jovinian. Quam diu jejunavit Adam in Paradiso fuit. Comedit et ejectus est. Statim duxit uxorem.

Ver. 12456. Mete unto wombe] In marg. C. 1. Esca ventri, &c.

Ver. 12463. The Apostle saith] Philippians, iii. 18.

Ver. 12468. stinking is thy cod] So MS. C. Or we may read with MS. B. δ. *o foule* stinking cod.

Ver. 12471. to find] *to supply*. So ver. 14835.

> She *found* hireself and eke hire doughtren two.

See also P. P. fol. lxxx.

> For a frend, that *findeth* him, faileth him never at nede.

Ver. 12473. V. D'Artigny. Vol. VI. p. 399.

Ver. 12497. the white wine of Lepe] According to the Geographers, Lepe was not far from Cadiz. This wine, of whatever sort it may have been, was probably much stronger than the Gascon wines, usually drunk in England. La Rochelle and Bourdeaux, ver. 12505, the two chief ports of Gascony, were both, in Chaucer's time, part of the English dominions.

Spanish wines might also be more alluring upon account of their greater rarity. Among the Orders of the Royal Household, in 1604, is the following. (MS. *Harl.* 293. fol. 162.) "And whereas, in tymes past, Spanish wines, called Sacke, were little or noe whit used in our courte, and that in later years, though not of ordinary allowance, it was thought convenient, that noblemen, &c. might have a boule or glass, &c. We understanding that it is now used as common drinke, &c. reduce the allowance to XII Gallons a day for the court," &c.

Ver. 12520. Redeth the Bible] Proverbs, xxxi. 4.

Ver. 12537 Stilbon] John of Salisbury, from whom our author probably took this story and the following, calls him *Chilon*. Polycrat. L. 1. c. 5. Chilon Lacedæmonius, jungendæ societatis causâ missus Corinthum, duces et seniores populi ludentes invenit in aleâ. Infecto itaque negotio reversus est, &c. Accordingly in ver. 12539. MS. C. 1. reads very rightly *Lacedomye* instead of *Calidone*, the common reading. Our author has used before *Lacedomie* for *Lacedæmon*, ver. 11692.

Ver. 12542. Yplaying atte hasard] I have added the prepositive *y* for the sake of the metre. *Atte* is a dissyllable. It was originally *atten*, and is so used by R. G. p. 379. 431. It has been frequently corrupted into *at the*; but in Chaucer it may, and, I think, should almost everywhere be restored. See ver. 125. 3934. 4303. where some MSS. have preserved the true readings—*atte* Bowe; *atte* full.

Ver. 12585. his nailes] i. e. with which he was nailed to the Cross. Sir J. Mandevile, c. vii. "And thereby in the walle is the place where the 4 Nayles of our Lord weren hidd; for he had 2 in his hondes and 2 in his feet: and of one of theise the Emperour of Costantynoble made a brydille to his hors, to bere him in bataylle; and thorgh

vertue thereof he overcame his enemies," &c. He had said before, c. ii. that "on of the nayles that Crist was naylled with on the cross," was at Constantynoble; and "on in France, in the Kinges chapelle."

Ver. 12586. the blood—in Hailes] The Abbey of Hailes, in Glocestershire, was founded by Richard, King of the Romans, brother to Henry III. This precious relick, which was afterwards commonly called "the blood of Hailes," was brought out of Germanie by the son of Richard, Edmund, who bestowed a third part of it upon his father's Abbey of Hailes, and some time after gave the other two parts to an Abbey of his own foundation at Ashrug near Berkhamsted. Hollinsh. v. ii. p. 275.

Ver. 12590. the bicchel bones two] The common reading is *thilke* bones. The alteration, which I have ventured to make, is not authorized entirely by any MS. but in part by several. MS. A. reads *bichet*. C. 1. *the becched*. HA. and H. *the bicched*. C. B. ʒ. Nc. Ed. Ca. i. *the bicchid*. B. *a. the bicche*. Ed. Ca. 2. *the bitched*. *Bickel*, as explained by Kilian, is *Talus*, ovillus et lusorius; and *Bickelen*, talis ludere. See also Had. Junii Nomencl. n. 213. Our dice indeed are the antient *tesseræ*, (κυβοι) not *tali* (αστραγαλοι); but, both being games of hazard, the implements of one might be easily attributed to the other. It should seem from Junius, loc. cit. that the Germans had preserved the custom of playing with the natural bones, as they have different names for a game with *tali ovilli*, and another with *tali bubuli*.

Ver. 12601. Go bet] The same phrase is used in Leg. of G. W. Dido. 288.

> The herd of hartes founden is anon,
> With hey, *go bet*, pricke thou, let gon, let gon.

where it seems to be a term of the chase.

Ver. 12885. Seint Heleine] Sir J. Mandeville, c. vii. p. 93. "and nyghe that awtier is a place undre erthe, 42 degrees of depenesse, where the Holy Croys was founden, be the wytt of Seynte Elyne, undir a roche, where the Jewes had hidde it. And that was the veray croys assayed; for they founden 3 crosses; on of oure Lord and 2 of the 2 theves: and Seynte Elyne proved hem on a ded body, that aros from dethe to lyve, whan that it was leyd on it, that oure Lord dyed on." See also c. ii. p. 15.

Ver. 12914. I smell a loller] This is in character, as appears from a treatise of the time. *Harl. Catal.* n. 1666. "Now in Engelond it is a comun protectioun ayens persecutioun—if a man is customable to swere nedeles and fals and unavised, by the bones, nailes, and sides and other membres of Crist.—And to absteyne fro othes nedeles and unleful,—and repreve sinne by way of charite, is mater and cause now, why Prelates and sum Lordes sclaundren men, and clepen hem *Lollardes*, Eretikes," &c.

Ver. 12919. Sayde the Shipman] So MS. B. δ. the *one* MS. (as I have said in the Discourse &c. §. XXXI.) which countenances the giving of this Prologue to the Shipman. In MSS. C. and D. this passage is given to the Sompnour, but not by way of Prologue to his tale. In C. it is followed by the Wife of Bathes Prologue, and in D. by the Prologue which in this edition is prefixed to the Squieres tale.

When these diversities are considered, and also that the whole passage is wanting in the five best MSS. it may perhaps appear not improbable, that these 28 lines, though composed by Chaucer, had not been inserted by him in the body of his work; that they were therefore omitted in the first copies, and were afterwards injudiciously prefixed to the Squieres tale, when the true Prologue of that tale, as printed above, was become unsuitable, by reason of the tale itself being removed out of its proper place.

Ver. 12923. springen cockle] This seems to shew that Chaucer considered *Loller*, as derived from *lolium*; but Du Cange, in v. LOLLARDUS, rather supposes that Lollard was a word of German original, signifying *mussitator*; a *mumbler* of prayers. See also Kilian, in v. LOLLAERD.

Ver. 12942. He mote *us* clothe] In Ed. Ur. it is *them*; but all the MSS. that I have seen read *us*: which would lead one to suspect, that this Tale was originally intended for a female character.

Ver. 13000. Malvesie] See the note on ver. 9681.

Ver. 13027. under the yerde] This was properly said of children. MS. *Bod.* Jun. 66. Monachicum Colloquium, SAX. LAT. p. 15.

> Mag. *Quid manducas in die?*
> Hiwæt ytst thu on dæg?
> Dis. *Adhuc carnibus vescor,*
> Gyt flæscmetum ic bruce,
> *quia* puer *sum*
> Fortham cild ic eom
> sub virga *degens*.
> under gyrda drohtniende.

See before ver. 7896.

Ver. 13061. on my Portos] i. e. *Breviary*. Du Cange in v. PORTIFORIUM. *Portuasses* are mentioned among other prohibited books in the Stat. 3 and 4 E. VI. c. 10. And in the Parliament-roll of 7 E. IV. n. 40. there is a Petition, that the robbing of—*Porteous*—Grayell, Manuell, &c. should be made felonie without clergy; to which the King answered, *Le Roy s'avisera*.

Ver. 13246. Haven hire] The final *n* in *Haven* has been added for the sake of the metre; but unnecessarily, as the *e* feminine may be pronounced before *h*, as before a consonant. See the n. on ver. 300.

Ver. 13368. a thousand last quad yere] *Last* in TEUT. is *onus*, *sarcina*. Kilian. and *quaed* in the same language is *malus*. The meaning therefore is; God give the monke *a thousand last* (ever so great a weight) of *quad yere* (bad years, misfortune). The Italians use *mal anno* in the same sense.

Ver. 13383. O Lord, our Lord] The Prioresse begins her legende with the first verses of the 8th Psalm, Domine, Dominus noster &c.

Ver. 13401. Whan he thin herte light] i. e. lighted; *made light*, or *pleasant*. So in Tro. B. iii. 1068.

> Whan wroth is he that shold my sorrowes *light*.

Ver. 13444. Seint Nicholas] We have an account of the very early piety of this Saint in his Lesson, Brev. Roman. vi. Decemb. Cujus viri sanctitas, quanta futura esset, jam ab incunabulis apparuit. Nam infans, cum reliquas dies lac nutricis frequens sugeret, quartâ et sextâ feriâ (on *Wednesdays and Fridays*) semel duntaxat, idque vesperi, sugebat.

Ver. 13509. souded in virginitee] or (according to the better MSS.) *souded* to *virginitee*. *Souded* is from the FR. *soulidé*, and that from the LAT. *solidatus*; consolidated, fastened together. In Wicliff's N. T. Dedis. iii. *consolidatæ* is rendered *sowdid*. The latter part of this stanza refers to Revelat. xiv. 3, 4.

Ver. 13575. I halse thee] MSS. Ask. 1. 2. read "I conjure thee"—but that seems to be a gloss. *To halse* signifies properly *to embrace round the neck*, from the SAX. *hals*, the neck. See ver. 10253. So in C.L. ver. 1290.

> I stand and speke and laugh and kisse and *halse*.

It signifies also to salute. P. P. fol. xxii.

> I *halse* hym hendlich, as I hys frende were.

and fol. xxxix. *to salute with reverence*.

> And the eleven sterres *halsed* him all.

which seems to be the sense here.

Ver. 13597. than wol I fetchen thee] The best MSS. read *now*, which is scarce reconcileable to any rules of speech. Even with the correction which I have adopted, there is a greater confusion in this narration than I recollect to have observed in any other of Chaucer's stories.

Ver. 13623. to japen he began] So MS. E. Some MSS. read—*tho* began.

Ver. 13650. at Popering] *Poppering*, or *Poppeling*, was the name of a parish in the Marches of Calais. Our famous

antiquary Leland was once Rector of it. Tanner. Bib. Brit. in v. LELAND.

Ver. 13655. paindemaine] That this must have been a sort of remarkably white bread is clear enough. Skinner derives it from *Panis matutinus, Pain de matin;* and indeed Du Cange mentions a species of loaves or rolls called *Matinelli.* However I am more inclined to believe that it received its denomination from the province of Maine, where it was, perhaps, made in the greatest perfection. I find it twice in a Northern tale called "The freiris of Berwick." MS. Maitland.

And als that creil is full of *breid of mane.*

And again—The *mane breid.*

Ver. 13664. ciclatoun—Edit. 1775, chekelatoun] The Glossaries suppose this word to be compounded of *cheke* and *latoun*, a species of base metal like gold: but it seems rather to be merely a corruption of the FR. *Ciclaton;* which originally signified *a circular robe of state*, from the GR. LAT. *Cyclas;* and afterwards *the cloth of gold*, of which such robes were generally made. Du Cange in v. CYCLAS has produced instances enough of both senses. In fact several MSS. read *Ciclaton;* and I have no excuse for not having followed them, but that I was misled by the authority of Spenser, as quoted by Mr. Warton, Obs. on Sp. v. i. p. 194. Upon further consideration, I think it is plain that Spenser was mistaken in the very foundation of his notion, "that the quilted Irish jacket embroidered with gilded leather" had any resemblance to the "robe of Sheckiaton." He supposes, that Chaucer is here describing Sir Thopas, *as he went to fight against the Giant*, in his robe of Sheckiaton; whereas, on the contrary, it is evident that Sir Thopas is here described *in his usual habit in time of peace.* His warlike apparel, when he goes to fight against the Giant, is described below, ver. 13783 and foll. and is totally different.

Ver. 13665. a jane] a coin of *Janua* (*Genoa*), called in our Statutes *Galley halfpence.* See the quotations from Stow in Mr. Warton's Obs. on Sp. v. i. p. 180.

Ver. 13667. hauking for the rivere] See the note on ver. 6466.

Ver. 13671. Ther ony ram] See the note on ver. 550.

Ver. 13682. a launcegay] The Editt. have split this improperly into two words, as if *gay* were an epithet. It occurs as one word in Rot. Parl. 29 H. VI. n. 8. "And the said Evan then and there *with a launcegay* smote the said William Tresham threughe the body a foote and more whereof he died." Nicot describes a *Zagaye* to be a Moorish lance, longer and slenderer than a pike; from the SPAN. ARAB. Azagáya.

Ver. 13692. cloue gilofre] *Clou de girofle.* FR. *Caryophyllus.* LAT. A clove-tree, or the fruit of it. Sir J. Mandeville, c. xxvi. describing a country beyond Cathaie, says. "And in that contree, and in other contrees thereabouten, growen many trees, that beren *clowe gylofres* and *notemuges*, and grete notes of Ynde, and of canelle and of many other spices."

But the most apposite illustration of this passage is a similar description in Chaucer's R. R. ver. 1360—72.—in the Original, ver. 1347—50. See also a note of *an ingenious correspondent* in Mr. Warton's Obs. on Sp. v. i. p. 139. Ed. 1762. where this passage is very properly adduced, to shew "that the Rime of Sire Thopas was intended as a burlesque on the old ballad romances."

Ver. 13722.] in toun] These two last words, which are plainly superfluous, are distinguished by a mark of this kind in MS. C. 1. and the same mark is repeated in ver. 13743, 13752, and 13815. where the two final syllables are also superfluous to the metre. Whether in all these cases the words thus separated are to be considered as idle additions, for the purpose of introducing the rime which answers to them, or whether some lines, which originally connected them with the context, have been lost, it is not easy to determine. Upon the latter supposition, which, I confess, appears to me the most probable, we may imagine that, in the present instance, the three last lines of this stanza and the three first of the following, except the words "in toun," have dropped out. In the three other instances, only two lines and the two first feet of the third may be supposed to be wanting.

In support of this hypothesis it may be observed, that in the very next Stanza, the last line, ver. 13731. and the following line, in MS. C. 1. stand thus.

The contree of Faerie so wilde
For in that contree n'as ther non
[That to him durst ride or gon]
Neither wif ne childe.

Whether the two lines and part of another which I have inserted before "wilde" from other MSS. be genuine, I will not be positive; but it is very clear, I think, that something is wanting. The line between hooks, which is inserted in MS. C. 1. in a later hand, is in MSS. HA. D.

Ver. 13733. he spied] Ed. Urr. reads *spired;* I know not upon what authority. But the emendation is probable enough; as the expression of *spying with the mouth* seems to be too extravagantly absurd even for this composition. To *spire*, or *spere*, Gl. Doug. signifies *to enquire*, from the SAX. spyrian. See P. L. p. 327. Gower, *Conf Am.* fol. 182.

Ver. 13739. Sire Oliphaunt] Sir *Elephant;* a proper name for a giant. Mandevile, p. 283. "And there ben also many wylde bestes, and nameliche of *Olyfauntes.*" The very learned and ingenious author of *Letters on Chivalry*, &c. supposes, "that the *Boke* of *The Giant Olyphant and Chylde Thopas* was not a fiction of Chaucer's own, but a story of antique fame, and very celebrated in the days of chivalry." I can only say, that I have not been so fortunate as to meet with any traces of such a story of an earlier date than the Canterbury Tales.

Ver. 13741. by Termagaunt] This Saracen deity, in an old Romance, MS. Bod. 1624. is constantly called *Tervagan.*

De devant sei fait porter sun dragon,
E l'estendart *tervagan* e *mahum*,
E un ymagene *apolin* le felun.

And again.

Pleignent lur deus *tervagan* et *mahum*,
E *apollin*, dunt il mie rien unt.

This Romance, which in the MS. has no title, may possibly be an older copy of one, which is frequently quoted by Du Cange under the title of *Le Roman de Roncevaux.* The author's name was Turold, as appears from the last line.

Ci falt le geste que *turold'* declinet.

He is not mentioned by any of the writers of French literary history that I have seen.

Ver. 13758. a fel staffe sling] This is the reading of the best MSS. but what kind of sling is meant I know not. [See the Gloss. in v. STAFF SLING. Add. Note. Ed. 1798.]

Ver. 13775. gestours for to tellen tales] The proper business of a *gestour* was *to recite tales*, or *gestes;* which was only one of the branches of the Minstrel's profession.

Minstrels and *Gestours* are mentioned together in the following lines, from *William of Nassyngton's* Translation of a religious treatise by *John of Waldby.* MS. *Reg.* 17 C. viii. p. 2.

I warne you furst at the begynninge,
That I will make no vain carpinge
Of dedes of armys ne of amours,
As dus *mynstrelles* and *jestours*,
That makys carpinge in many a place
Of *Octoviane* and *Isembrase*,
And of many other jestes,
And namely whan they come to festes;
Ne of the life of *Beys of Hampton*,
That was a knight of gret renoun,
Ne of *Sir Gye of Warwyke*,
All if it might sum men lyke—

I cite these lines to shew the species of tales related by the ancient Gestours, and how much they differed from what we now call *jestes.*

Ver. 13777. Of romaunces that ben *reales*] So in the Rom. of *Ywain and Gawain* MS. *Cott.* Galb. E. ix.

He fund a knight under a tre;
Upon a cloth of gold he lay;
Byfor him sat a ful fayr may:
A lady sat with tham in fere;
The maiden red, that thai might here,
A *real romance* in that place.—

The original of this title, which is an uncommon one, I take to have been this. When the French romances found their way into Italy (not long before the year 1300. Crescimb. T. i. p. 336.) some Italian undertook to collect together all those relating to Charlemagne and his family, and to form them into a regular body of history. The six first books of this work come down to the death of Pepin. They begin thus: Qui se comenza la hystoria el *Real di Fransa* comenzando a Constantino imperatore secondo molte lezende che io ho attrovate e racolte insieme. *Edit. Mutinæ*. 1491. fol. It was reprinted in 1537 under this title, "*I reali di Franza*, nel quale si contiene la generazione di tutti i Re, Duchi, Principi e Baroni di Franza, e delli Paladini, colle battaglie da loro fatte &c." Quadrio, T. vi. p. 530. Salviati had seen a MS. of this work written about 1350 (Crescimb. T. i. p. 330), and I do not believe that any mention of a *Real*, or *Royal*, *Romance* is to be found, in French or English, prior to that date.

Ver. 13786. He didde next his white lere] *He did*, or *put*, *on* next his white *skin*. To *don*, *do on*, and *doff*, *do off*. have been in use, as vulgar words, long since Chaucer's time. *Lere* seems to be used for *skin* in Isumbras. MS. *Cott.* Cal. ii. fol. 129.

His lady is white as wales bone,
Here *lere* brygte to se upon,
So faire as bloume on tre.

Though it more commonly signifies only, what we call *complexion*.

In the Romance of *Li beau desconus*, his arming is thus described, fol. 42.

They caste on him a scherte of selk,
A gypell as white as melk
In that semely sale,
And syzt an hawberk brygt,
That richely was adygt
With mayles thykke and smale—

Ver. 13793. of Jewes werk] I do not recollect to have seen the Jews celebrated any where as remarkable artificers. I am therefore inclined to adopt an explanation of this word, which I find in a note of the learned Editor of *Anc. Scott. Poems*, p. 230. "This Jow," not this Jew, but this juggler or magician. The words to *jowk*, to deceive, and *jowkery-pawkry*, juggling tricks, are still in use. In Lord Hyndford's MS. p. 136. there is a fragment of a sort of fairy tale, where "Scho is the Quene of Jowis" means, "She is the queen of magicians."

According to this explanation "Jewes werk" may signify the work of magicians, or fairies.

Ver. 13800. a charboucle] *A carbuncle* (*Escarboucle*, Fr.) was a common bearing. Guillim's Heraldry, p. 109.

Ver. 13804. cuirbouly] *Cuir bouilli*, of which Sir Thopases boots were made, was also applied to many other purposes. See Froissart, v. i. c. 110. 120. and v. iv. c. 19. In this last passage, he says, the Saracens covered their targes with *cuir bouilli de Capadoce*, où nul fer ne peut prendre n'attacher; si le cuir n'est trop échauffé.

Ver. 13807. rewel bone] What kind of material this was I profess myself quite ignorant. In the *Turnament of Tottenham*, ver. 75. (Anc. Poet. v. ii. p. 18.) Tibbe is introduced with "a garland on her head full of *ruell bones*." The derivation in Gloss. Urr. of this word from the Fr. *riolé*, diversly coloured, has not the least probability. The other, which deduces it from the Fr. *rouelle*; *rotula*; the whirl-bone, or knee-pan; is more plausible; though, as the Glossarist observes, that sense will hardly suit here.

Ver. 13823. Of ladies love and druerie] I have taken the liberty here of departing from the MSS. which read—

And of ladies love druerie.

Upon second thoughts I am more inclined to throw out *love* as a gloss for *druerie*, and to read thus;

And of ladies druerie.

Druerie is strangely explained in Gloss. Urr. *Sobriety*, *modesty*. It means *courtship*, *gallantry*.

Ver. 13828. Of Sire Libeux] His romance is in MS. *Cott.* Cal. ii. In the 12th Stanza we have his true name and the reason of it. King Arthur speaks,

Now clepeth him alle thus,
Ly beau desconus,
For the love of me,
Than may ye wete arowe,
The fayre unknowe
Certes so hatte he.

Ibid. Pleindamour] This is the reading of the MSS. and I know not why we should change it for *Blandamour*, as both names sound equally well.

Ver. 13833. As sparcle] The same simile is in *Isumbras*, fol. 130. b.

He spronge forth, as sparke on [f. of] glede.

Glode in the preceding verse is probably for *glowde*, glowed; from the Sax. glowan, *candere*.

Ver. 13844. Sire Percivell] The Romance of *Perceval le Galois*, or *de Galis*, was composed in octosyllable French verse by Chrestien de Troyes, one of the oldest and best French Romancers, before the year 1191. Fauchet, L. ii. c. x. It consisted of above sixty thousand verses (*Bibl. des Rom.* T. ii. p 250) so that it would be some trouble to find the fact which is, probably, here alluded to. The Romance, under the same title, in French prose, printed at Paris, 1530, fol. can be only an abridgement, I suppose, of the original poem.

Ver. 13845. So worthy under wede] This phrase occurs repeatedly in the Romance of *Emaré*.

fol. 70. b. Than sayde that *worthy unther wede*.
74. b. The childe was *worthy unther wede*,
And sate upon a nobyl stede.

See also fol. 71. b. 73. a.

Ver. 13852. the devil I beteche] I *betake*, *recommend* or *give*, *to* the devil. See ver. 3748.

My soule *betake I unto* Sathanas.——

and ver. 8037. 17256. where the preposition is omitted, as here. *To take*, in our old language, is also used for *To take to*; *To give*. See ver. 13334.

He *toke* me certain gold, I wote it wel.

And compare ver. 13224. 13286.

The change of *betake* into *beteche* was not so great a licence formerly as it would be now, as *ch* and *k* seem once to have been pronounced in nearly the same manner. See ver. 3307, 8, 11, 12. where *werk* is made to rime to *cherche* and *clerk*. It may be observed too, that the Saxons had but one verb, tæcan, to signify *capere* and *docere*; and though our ancestors, even before Chaucer's time, had split that single verb into two, *To take* and *To teche*, and had distinguished each from the other by a different mode of inflexion, yet the compound verb *Betake*, which according to that mode of inflexion ought to have formed its past time *Betoke*, formed it often *Betaught*, as if no such distinction had been established. See R. R. ver. 4428. Gamelyn, 666. The regular past time *Betoke* occurs in ver. 16009.

Ver. 13879. I mene of Mark and Matthew] The conjunction *and* has been added for the sake of the metre, without authority, and perhaps without necessity; as *Mark* was probably written by Chaucer *Marke*, and pronounced as a Dissyllable.

The tale of Melibeus] Mr. Thomas has observed, that this Tale seems to have been written in *blank verse*. MSS. notes upon Chaucer, Ed. Urr. in Brit. Mus. It is certain, that in the former part of it we find a number of blank verses intermixed, in a much greater proportion than in any of our author's other prose writings. But this poetical

style is not, I think, remarkable beyond the first four or five pages.

P. 107, col. 1. l. 8. the sentence of Ovide] *Rem. Am.* 125.

> Quis matrem, nisi mentis inops, in funere nati
> Flere vetet? &c.

It would be a laborious and thankless task to point out the exact places of all the quotations, which are made use of in this treatise. I shall therefore confine my observations of that kind to a few passages, which are taken from authors not commonly to be met with.

P. 108, col. 2. l. 2. Piers Alphonse] He calls himself *Petrus Alphunsi* in his *Dialogus contra Judæos*. MS. *Harl.* 3861. He there informs us, that he was himself originally a Jew, but converted and baptized in the year 1106, in July *die natalis App. Petri et Pauli*; upon which account he took the name of *Peter*. "*Fuit autem pater meus spiritualis* Alfunsus, *gloriosus Hispanie imperator*, (the I king of Arragon of that name and the VII of Castile) —*quare, nomen ejus prefato nomini meo apponens*, Petrus Alfunsi *mihi nomen imposui*." After his conversion he wrote the Dialogue above-mentioned, and also another work, which is here quoted by Chaucer, and of which therefore I think myself obliged to give some account.

It is extant in MS. in many Libraries, but the only copy which I have had an opportunity of examining is in the Museum, *Bib. Reg.* 10 B. xii. It is there entitled "*Petri Adelfonsi de Clericali disciplinâ*," and begins thus. "Dixit Petrus Adelfonsus, servus xp̃i ihu, compositor hujus libri—Libellum compegi partim ex proverbiis et castigationibus Arabicis et fabulis et versibus, et partim ex animalium et volucrum similitudinibus."—After a short proem, he enters thus upon his main subject. "*Eboc* igitur philosophus, qui linguâ Arabicâ cognominatur *Edric*, dixit filio suo; Timor Domini sit tua negotiatio &c."—The work then proceeds in the form of a Dialogue between the Philosopher and his son, in which the precepts of the former are for the most part illustrated by apposite fables and examples. *Edris*, according to D'Herbelot in v. was the name of *Enoch* among the Arabians, who attribute to him many fabulous compositions. Whether Alfonsus had any of them in his view I know not, nor is it material. The manner and style of his work shew both many marks of an Eastern original, and one of his stories *Of a trick put upon a thief* is entirely taken from the Calilah u Damnah,* a celebrated collection of Oriental apologues.

In this part of the world, however, Alfonsus may be considered as an original writer. His work was very early translated into French verse. In an old copy, MS. *Reg.* 16. E. VIII. the translation is entitled "*Proverbes Peres Anforse*;" and there is a short introduction by the translator, in which he says, "*Voil Peres Anfors translater*."—In a later copy, MS. *Bod.* 1607, the introduction is omitted, but the poem is entitled "*le romaunz* Peres Aunfour *coment il aprist et chastia sun fiz belement*."—In another copy, MS. *Harl.* 4388. there is neither introduction nor title; so that, by the mere omissions of transcribers, the French translation has put on the appearance of an original work, and is quoted as such by M. le Comte de Caylus in his *Mémoire sur les Fabliaux* (Acad. des Ins. t. xx. p. 361.) under the general title of *Le chastoiement du pere au fiz*. The fable *of the Sheep*, of which M. de Caylus has there given an abstract, is in the Latin Alfonsus, Fab. ix. I will add, that the same fable, in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, N. xxx. is fathered upon *uno novellatore di Messer Azzolino*; and Cervantes, changing the Sheep for Goats, has put it into the mouth of Sancho. Don Quix. P. 1. c. xx. Cervantes indeed has also altered the application of it, but, I think, not for the better.

I am inclined to believe that Hebers, the author or translator of the French romance called *Dolopatos*, in the beginning of the XIIIth Century, had read this work of Alfonsus, perhaps before it was translated into French. The story *of the stone thrown into the well*, Decameron, vii. 4. which Fauchet supposes Boccace to have taken from Hebers, is in Alfonsus, Fab. xi. It is not in the Greek *Syntipas*,† which I imagine to have been the groundwork

* Though the exact age of the Calilah u Damnah be by no means clear, we know that it was translated out of Arabic into Greek by Symeon Seth several years before Alfonsus wrote. The story mentioned here is not in that copy of Symeon's translation which Starkius has printed under the title of *Specimen Sapientiæ Indorum*. Berolin. 1697. 8vo. but it is in MS. *Bod.* 510. and in the Latin version of Symeon's book, which Poussin published by way of Appendix to the History of Pachymeres, *inter Script. Hist. Byzant.* The various titles, under which this Eastern romance has passed through Europe, may be seen in the Preface of Starkius, and in Fabric. Bib. Gr. vi. 460. and x. 324. though neither of them has taken notice of an Italian translation, or imitation, by Firenzuola, entitled, *Discorsi degli animali*. See his *Frose*, Fir. 1548. The other Italian version, which they mention, by Doni, was translated into English, under the title of "The moral Philosophy of Doni, out of Italian, by Sir Thomas North, Knight," 4to. 1601. (Ames. p. 435) and is alluded to, I suppose, by Jonson in his Epicœne, p. 494. by the name of *Doni's Philosophy*, though he has made the Speaker, Sir Am. La-Fool, whether designedly, or not, I am uncertain, confound it with *Reynard the fox*. Since they wrote, there has been an Edition at Paris in 1724, with this title, "Contes et fables Indiennes, de Bidpai et de Lokman, traduites D'Ali Tchelebi-Ben-Saleh, Auteur Turc. Oeuvre posthume, par M. Galland." The words "*et de Lokman*" in this title I suspect to have been added by the Bookseller, for I cannot find any thing of Lokman in the work itself. Perhaps M. Galland might have intended to annex the fables of Lokman, but was prevented by death. For the rest, there is no material difference between this Edition, and a former French version, which was made from the Persic and printed in 1698, except in the style. They both differ very considerably from the Greek.

I will just take notice, that one of the fables in the Greek, p. 444, has been inserted, but with great variations, by Matthew Paris in his History, *ad ann.* 1195. as a Parable, which Richard I, after his return from the East, was used frequently to relate *ingratos redarguendo*.

† The only copy which I have ever seen of *Syntipas* is in MS. *Harl.* 5560. I should guess that it agreed in substance with that which Du Cange made use of in his *Glossarium Med. et Inf. Græcitatis* (see his *Index Auctorum*, p. 33.), though it seems to be of a later age, and in a more depraved dialect. They differ in this, that the Harleian copy is said to have been translated from the *Persic* (απο Περσικης βιβλου εις Ρωμαικην γλωσσαν), and Du Cange's from the *Syriac* (απο Συριακης βιβλου. ὃς ισχυν αυτας λεξεσιν, εις την Ελληνικην γλωσσαν). However, I would not vouch that it really was translated either from the Persic or Syriac. Among the Oriental MSS. in the Bodleian Library, the Catalogue mentions one in Turkish (Rawlinson, 31.) *De uxore Chafikini Turcarum regis et filio*, which I suspect to contain this same story, translated perhaps from the Greek, or from the Italian *Erasto*.

Syntipas is said to have been printed at Venice, *lingua Græcâ vulgari*. Fabric. Bibl. Gr. x. 515. How far that Edition may agree with the Harleian MS. I cannot say, having never seen it. To judge by the MS. only, it seems probable, that, if *Syntipas* was the groundwork of the *Dolopatos*, Hebers must have departed as much from his original, as the succeeding compilers of *Les sept Sages* and of *Erasto* have from Hebers. Neither the story mentioned in the text, nor the two others, which Fauchet refers to as borrowed by Boccace from Hebers, viz. Decam. iii. 2. and viii. 8. are to be found in the MS. *Syntipas*. On the other hand, the story in the Decam. vii. 6. which is said in the text to be probably copied from Alfonsus, is also in *Syntipas*, though, from the silence of Fauchet, we may presume that it was not in the *Dolopatos*.

The Plan of Syntipas is exactly the same with that of *Les sept Sages*, the Italian *Erasto*, the French *Eraste*, and our own little story-book, *The seven Wise Masters*; except that, instead of *Diocletian* of *Rome*, the King is called *Cyrus* of *Persia*, and, instead of one tale, each of the Philosophers tells two. This last circumstance is an argument, I think, for the originality of *Syntipas*; and another may be drawn from the insipidity of the greatest part of the tales. The only one of them, which, as I remember, is retained in the modern *Erastus*, is that of the Knight, who in a fit of groundless passion killed a faithful dog. *Eraste*, ch. viii. It is plainly borrowed from a story in the Calilah u Damnah, p. 339. of the Greek translation, though there, instead of a dog, the animal is called Νυμφη, by some mistake, as I suspect, of the translator.

There is a translation of this Romance in English octosyllable verse, not later than Chaucer's time, as I imagine, in MS. Cotton. Galba. E. ix. It is entitled, "The proces of the seven sages," and agrees exactly with *Les sept sages de Rome* in French Prose in MS. Harl. 3860

of the *Dolopatos*, and therefore I presume that it was inserted by Hebers, or the monk, whose Latin he translated, and possibly from Alfonsus. At least it is not more probable that Boccace should take it from Hebers than from Alfonsus, with whose work he appears to have been well acquainted. One of his novels, Decam. vii. 6. is plainly copied from thence, Fab. viii. and his celebrated novel of the two friends, *Tito* and *Gisippo*, Decam. x. 8. is borrowed, with hardly any variation, except in the names of persons and places, from the 2d of Alfonsus, or, which is the same thing, from the *Gesta Romanorum*,‡ into which collection, after a time, almost all the best fables of Alfonsus were incorporated.

This last circumstance, though certainly very honourable to Alfonsus, has been very prejudicial to his fame. For instance, a translation, as I suppose, of his last mentioned story *of the two Friends* is entitled, in a MS. of Lydgate, belonging to the late Dr. Askew, "a Tale of two Marchants of Egypt and of Baldad, *ex Gestis Romanorum*," (Mr. Farmer's Notes on the Merch. of Ven. Last Ed. of Shakesp. App. ii.) as if the tale had first appeared in that work. However somebody, not long after the invention of Printing, as I guess, did a little more justice to Alfonsus, by putting together his principal Tales, and inserting them, with his name, in a collection of the fables of Æsop and other eminent fabulists in Latin. This collection was soon turned into French; and from that Version Caxton made the translation into English, which has been mentioned in the Discourse, &c. n. 22. Caxton's book has been reprinted more than once. I have seen an Edition of it in 1647, and I doubt whether there has been one since.

P. 108. col. 2. l. 31. For it is written &c.] What is included between hooks is wanting in all the MSS. which I have examined. It is plainly necessary to the sense, as it shews us what *the fourth and fifth reasons* of Melibeus were, to which Prudence replies in p. 169. I have therefore inserted as literal a translation as I imagine Chaucer might have made of the following passage in the French *Melibée*. MS. *Reg.* 19. C. vii. *Car il est escript, la gengleric des femmes ne peut riens celler fors ce qu'elle ne sect. Apres le philosophre dit, en mauvais conseil les femmes vainquent les hommes, et par ces raisons je ne dois point user de ton conseil.*

P. 110. col. 2. l. 41. Avise thee well] He refers, I presume, to Cato, L. iii. Dist. 6.

Sermones blandos blæsosque cavere memento.

P. 111. col. 1. l. 54. Assay to do swiche thinges] This precept of Cato is in L. iii. Dist 16.

Quod potes id tentato; operis ne pondere pressus
Succumbat labor, et frustra tentata relinquas.

P. 112. col. 2. l. 37. If thou have nede] Cato, L. iv. Dist. 14.

Auxilium a notis petito, si forte laboras;
Nec quisquam melior medicus quam fidus amicus.

P. 113. col. 1. l. 10. som men &c.] This passage which is defective in all the MSS. I have patched up, as well as I coud, by adding the words between hooks from the French *Melibée*, where it stands thus. *Aucunes gens ont enseigne leur decevour, car ils ont trop doubte que on ne les deceust. Apres tu te dois garder de venim, et si te dois garder de compaignie de moqueurs, car il est escript, Avec les moqueurs n'aies compaignie, et fuy leurs paroles comme le venim.*

P. 114. col. 2. l. 8. of the trespasours] The following passage, which the reader will see to be very material to the sense, I have translated from the French, and inserted between hooks, as before. *Et a ce respont dame Prudence. Certes, dist elle, Ie l'ottroye que de vengeance vient molt de maulx et de biens, mais vengeance n'appartient pas a un chascun, fors seulement aux juges et a ceulx qui ont la juridicion sur les malfaiteurs—*

‡ The title in the printed copies is "Ex gestis Romanorum historie notabiles collecte; de viciis virtutibusque tractantes; cum applicationibus moralisatis et mysticis." The author of this strange work is quite unknown, nor is it easy to fix with precision the time of its composition. Upon the whole I have no doubt that it is of a later date than Alfonsus, viz. the beginning of the xiiith Century, and I should guess that it was composed about the end of that Century, or the beginning of the xiiith.

Three couplets of *English* verses in ch. 68, and some *English* names in ch. 128. which are to be found in several old MSS. (the former chapter being there numbered liii. and the latter xxviii.) though they have been left out of the Editions, afford a reasonable ground for conjecturing, that one of our own countrymen was the author.

As it continued to be a popular book at the time of the invention of Printing, it was very early put to the Press, and several Editions of it were published in different places before the year 1500. The earliest Editions that I have seen agree together exactly, and contain 152 Chapters. The Edition at Rouen in 1521 contains 181 Chapters, the History of Apollonius Tyrius being the first of the additional chapters. See Discourse, &c. n. 16. An Edition of *Gesta Romanorum*, printed in 1488, (probably at *Argentina*, Strasbourg) agrees exactly with the Edition of 1521. In MSS. Harl. 2270, and 5250, which are both seemingly complete, the number of chapters does not exceed 102; and yet, notwithstanding there are so many more stories in the printed books, there are still several in the MSS. which, I apprehend, have never been printed. See a note upon the plot of Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* with the signature of T. T. vol. iii. p. 224. and an addition to it in Appendix, ii. See also a note of Mr. Farmer's in the same Appendix, where he mentions his having found *the story of the Caskets* "in an old translation of the *Gesta Romanorum* first printed by *Winkin de Worde*." As he says nothing of *the story of the Bond*, we may presume, from the known accuracy of Mr. Farmer's researches, that it is not contained in that translation.

It has been said above, that several of the fables in the *Gesta Romanorum* are taken from Alfonsus. The author has also borrowed from the Calilah u Damnah, by the help, I suppose, of some Latin translation from the Greek of Symeon Seth. The originals of the greatest part of his stories are not so easy to be traced. I speak of those which are found in the MSS. for of those in the Editt. many are plainly taken from well known authors, some of which are quoted by name, as Aulus Gellius, Macrobius, Augustinus, Gervasius Tilberiensis, and others.

I will add here a few instances, which occur to me at present, of stories, which writers of the xivth Century have, or rather may have, borrowed from the *Gesta Romanorum*; for, in some of these instances, it is possible that they may have had recourse to the very books, from which the compiler of that work drew his materials. I shall cite the chapters as they are numbered in the Edition of 1521 and in MS. *Harl.* 2270. Where reference is made to only one of these, it should be understood that I have not observed that story in the other.

Ch. viii. MS. 96. is copied by Gower, *Conf. Am.* B. v. fol. 122. b.—Ch. lvii. MS. 16 this story is in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, N. vi.—Ch. lxi. is in Gower, *Conf. Am.* B. iii. fol. 54.—Ch. lxxxix. This is the story of *The three Rings*, which has been said, but I think without any reason, to have been of use to Swift in his *Tale of a Tub*. It is in the C. N. A. *Nov.* lxxi. and in the *Decameron*, l. 3.—Ch. cix. There is a great similitude between this story and one which is told in the C. N. A. *Nov.* lxv. and in the *Decameron*, x. 1. See also Gower, *Conf. Am.* B. v. fol. 96, 7.—Ch. cxviii. is from Alfonsus. It is repeated in the C. N. A. *Nov.* lxxxiv.—Ch. cxix. MS. 102. has been versified by Gower, *Conf. Am.* B. v. fol. 110. b. It has been mentioned in Note* as taken originally from the *Sapientia Indorum*, p. 444.—Ch. cxxiv. MS. 20. makes the last Novel of the C. N. A.—Ch. clvii. makes the Lth Novel of the C. N. A. but it may have been taken from Alfonsus.—Ch. clxxi. MS. 55. is the story of *The two Friends*, mentioned in the text.—Ch. xlviii. MS. contains the story of *The Caskets*, and Ch. xcix. MS. that of *The Bond*, the two principal incidents in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. It is said in the additional note, App. ii. last Ed. of Shakesp. that *Ser. Giovanni* had "worked up these two stories into one, as they are in the Play." But that is a mistake, which I beg leave to retract here. The Novel of *Ser Giovanni* (*Pecorone, Giorn.* iv. *Nov.* 1.) is founded only upon the story of *The Bond*. It is probable, therefore, that Shakespeare took the story of *The Caskets* from the English *Gesta Romanorum*, and ingrafted it upon the other.—Ch. xcviii. MS. is copied with very little alteration in the C. N. A. *Nov.* lxviii.

Many more stories in Gower, which seem to be founded upon antient History, will appear upon examination to be taken from this book. It would lead me too far to particularize those which Lydgate, Occleve, and other later writers have borrowed from it. I will only mention, for the credit of the collection, that Ch. lxxx. contains the complete fable of Parnell's *Hermit*.

P. 115. col. 1. l. 51. If a man of higher estat] This prudent advice is from Cato, L. iv. Dist. 40.

> Cede locum læsus, fortunæ cede potenti [f. potetis]
> Lædere qui potuit, prodesse aliquando valebit.

P. 116. col. 1. l. 43. If a netherdes doughter] The Editt. have strangely corrupted this into—a *nerthes* doughter. The reading, which I have restored from the MSS. is confirmed by the original passage in *Pamphilus*. MS. *Bod.* 3703.

> Dummodo sit dives *cujusdam nata bubulci*,
> Eligit e mille quem libet illa virum.

P. 116. col. 2. l. 49. Waketh, &c.] I can find nothing nearer to this in Cato, than the maxim, L. iii. Dist. 7. *Segnitiem fugito.*—For the quotations from the same author in the same page, l. 65 and 70. see L. iv. Dist. 17. and L. iii. Dist. 23.

Ver. 13898. corpus Madrian] The relicks of St. *Maternus*. Gloss. Urr. But I can find no such saint in the common Legendaries.

Ver. 13948. A right wel faring] I have no better authority for the insertion of *right* than Ed. Urr.

Ver. 13968. lusheburghes] Base coins, probably, first imported, as Skinner thinks, from *Luxemburg*. They are mentioned in the Stat. 25 E. III. c. 2. *la monoie appelle* Lucynbourg, and in P. P. fol. 82 b.

As in *lushburgh* is a luther alay, yet loketh like sterling.

Ver. 14013. in the feld of Damascene] So Lydgate, from Boccace, speaks of Adam and Eve. *Trag.* B. i. c. 1.

> Of slime of the erth in *Damascene the felde*
> God made them above ech creature.

Boccace is much longer in relating their story, which is the first of his Tragedies.

Ver. 14021. Sampson] His tragedy is also in Boccace, B. i. c. 19. but our author seems rather to have followed the original, Judges xiv, xv, xvi.

Ver. 14060. the querne] *The mill.* Kuerna, *mola.* Island.

Ver. 14101. Hercules] In this account of the labours of Hercules Chaucer has evidently copied Boethius, L. iv. Met. 7. Many of the expressions he had used before in his prose translation of that author.

Ver. 14116. the hevene on his nekke longe] This is the reading of the best MSS. and is agreeable to Boethius, *loc. cit.* thus translated by Chaucer. "And the last of his labors was, that *he sustained the heven upon his necke* unbowed." The margin of MS. C. 1. explains *longe* to mean *diu*.

The Editt. read,

> And bare *his hed* upon his *spere* long.

Ver. 14123. saith Trophee] As all the best MSS. agree in this reading, I have retained it, though I cannot tell what author is alluded to. The margin of C. 1. has this note. Ilie vates Chaldæorum Tropheus.

The Editt. read—*for trophee.*—

Ver. 14149. Nabuchodonosor] For this history, and the following of Balthasar, see Daniel, i—v. The latter only is related by Boccace, B. ii. c. xxiii.

Ver. 14253. Zenobia] Her story is told by Boccace, *De cas. Vir.* L. iii. c. 7. but more at large in his book *De claris Mulieribus*; from which our author has plainly taken almost every circumstance of his narration; though in ver. 14331. he seems to refer to Petrarch as his original. Perhaps, Boccace's book had fallen into Chaucer's hands under the name of Petrarch.

Ver. 14295. Till fully fourty dayes] There is a confusion in this passage, which might have been avoided, if our author had recurred to Trebellius Pollio, Trig. Tyrann. c. xxix. de Zenobia. "Quum semel concubuisset, expectatis menstruis, continebat se si prægnans esset; sin minus, iterum potestatem quærendis liberis dabat."

Ver. 14378. a vitremite] This word is differently written in the MSS. *vitrymite; witermite; wintermite; vitryte.* The Editt. read, *autremite;* which is equally unintelligible.

Ver. 14385. *south* and septentrioun] The MSS. read *north;* but there can be no doubt of the propriety of the correction, which was first made, I believe, in Ed. Ur. In the *Rom. de la R.* from whence great part of this tragedy of Nero is translated, the passage stands thus, ver. 6501.

> Ce desloyal, que je te dy,
> Et d'Orient et de *Midy*,
> D'Occident, de Septentrion,
> Tint-il la jurisdicion.

Ver. 14408. domesman] *Judge.* The word in Boethius, who has also related this story, is *Censor*, L. ii. Met. vi.

> Ora non tinxit lacrymis, sed esse
> *Censor* extincti potuit decoris—

which our author has thus rendered in his prose version. "Ne no tere wette his face, but he was so harde herted, that he might be *domesman*, or *judge*, of her dedde beautee."

Ver. 14484. Wher Eliachim] I cannot find any priest of this name in the book of Judith. The High priest of Jerusalem is called Joacim in c. iv. which name would suit the verse better than Eliachim.

Ver. 14493. Antiochus] This Tragedy is a poetical paraphrase of ii. Maccabees, c. ix.

Ver. 14639. word and ende] Dr. Hickes in his Gr. A. S. p. 70. has proposed to read "*ord* and end," both here and in Tro. B. v. ver. 1668. He has shewn very clearly that *ord and end* was a common Saxon expression for *the whole* of a thing; the *beginning and end* of it. But all the MSS. that I have examined read *word*, and therefore I have left it in the text, as possibly the old Saxon phrase, in Chaucer's time, might have been corrupted.

Ver. 14645. Cresus] In the opening of this story, our author has plainly copied the following passage of his own version of Boethius, B. ii. Pro. 2. "Wiste thou not how Cresus, kind of Lydiens, *of whiche king Cyrus was ful sore agaste* a litel before, &c." But the greatest part is taken from the *Rom. de la R.* ver. 6847—6912.

Ver. 14679. Tragedie is] This reflection seems to have been suggested by one which follows soon after the mention of Crœsus in the passage just cited from Boethius. "What other thing bewaylen the cryinges of tragedyes but onely the dedes of fortune, that with an aukewarde stroke overtourneth the realmes of grete nobleye?"

Ver. 14685. Peter of Spaine] This tragedie and the three following, in several MSS. are inserted before, after ver. 14380. So that the Monkes Tale ends with ver. 14684.

> And cover hire bright face with a cloude.

In favour of this arrangement, it may be observed, that, when the Monk is interrupted, the Hoste alludes to this line as fresh in his memory, ver. 14788.

> He spake how *fortune covered with a cloude*
> I wote not what, and als of a *tragedie*
> Right now ye herd.—

Where *tragedie* may be supposed to allude to ver. 14679.

On the other hand, though the Monk professedly disregards chronological order, these very modern stories in the midst of the ancient make an aukward appearance; and as the Hoste declares himself to have been half asleep, he may very well be supposed to speak from a confused recollection of what had been said 88 verses before. And what he says of *tragedie* may be referred to ver. 14768.

I have followed the order observed in the best MSS. C. 1. Ask. 1. 2. HA.

Ver. 14697. Not Charles Oliver] Not the Oliver of Charles (Charlemagne) but an Oliver of Armorica, a second Genelon, or Ganelon. See ver. 13924. 15233. So this passage is to be understood, which in Ed. Urr. has been changed to—Not Charles, *ne* Oliver.—But who this *Oliver of Bretagne* was, whom our author charges as *werker* of the death of King Petro, is not so clear. According to Mariana, L. xvii. c. 13. such a charge might most properly be brought against *Bertrand* du Guesclin, a Breton, afterwards Constable of France; as it was in consequence of a private treaty with

him, that Petro came to his tent, where he was killed by his brother Henry, and partly, as some said, *con ayuda de Beltran*. But how he should come to be called *Oliver* I cannot guess; unless, perhaps, Chaucer confounded him with *Olivier de Clisson*, another famous Breton of those times, who was also Constable of France after Bertrand. Froissart mentions an *Olivier de Manny*, nephew to Bertrand du Guesclin, as receiving large rewards from King Henry; vol. i ch. 245. but he does not represent him as particularly concerned in the death of Petro.

The person meant, whoever he was, must have been sufficiently pointed out at the time by his coat of arms, which is described in ver. 14693, 4. The "egle of blak" in "a feld of snow" is plain enough, but the rest of the blazonry I cannot pretend to decypher.

Ver. 14701. Petro, King of Cypre] Concerning the taking of Alexandria by this prince, and his other exploits, see the note on ver. 51. and the authors there cited. He was assassinated in 1369. Acad. des Ins. T. xx. p. 439.

Ver. 14709. Barnabo Viscount] Bernabo Visconti Duke of Milan, was deposed by his nephew and thrown into prison, where he died in 1385.

I did not attend to this circumstance, when I stated the insurrection of Strawe in 1381, as the latest historical fact mentioned in these tales: Discourse, &c. n. 6. The death of Bernabo was certainly later. Fortunately however this difference of four years has no other consequence, than that it makes the supposed date of the Pilgrimage in 1383, which was before very doubtful, still more improbable. The Knight might as probably be upon a Pilgrimage in 1387 as in 1383, according to the precedent of Sir Mathew de Gourney. See note on ver. 43.

Ver. 14717. Hugelin of Pise] Chaucer himself has referred us to Dante for the original of this tragedy. See *Inferno*, c. xxxiii.

Ver. 14765, 6. These two verses in the Editt. have been transposed, to the confusion of the sense as well as of the metre.

Ver. 14811. say somwhat of hunting] For the propriety of this request, see the note on ver. 166 of the Monkes Character.

Ver. 14816. thou Sire John] I know not how it has happened, that in the principal modern languages, John, or its equivalent, is a name of contempt, or at least of slight. So the Italians use *Gianni*, from whence *Zani*; the Spaniards *Juan*, as *Bobo Juan*, a foolish John; the French *Jean*, with various additions; and in English, when we call a man *a John*, we do not mean it as a title of honour. Chaucer in ver. 3708, uses *Jacke fool*, as the Spaniards do *Bobo Juan*; and I suppose *Jack ass* has the same etymology.

The title of *Sire* was usually given, by courtesy, to Priests, both secular and regular.

Ver. 14852. a maner dey] *A kind of dey*; but what *a dey* was it is not easy to determine precisely. It is mentioned, as the last species of labourers in husbandry, in the Stat. 25 Edw. III. St. i. c. 1. Qe chescun charetter, caruer, chaceour des carues, bercher, porcher, *deye*, & tous autres servantz.—And again in the Stat. 37 Edw. III. c. 14. Item qe charetters, charuers, chaceours des carues, bovers, vachers, berchers, porchers, *deyes*, & tous autres gardeins des bestes, bateurs des bleez, & toutes maneres des genz d'estate de garson entendantz a husbandrie.—It probably meant originally *a day-labourer* in general, though it may since have been used to denote particularly the superintendant of a *Dayerie*. See Du Cange, in v. DAERIA. DAYERIA. DAGASCALCI.

Ver. 14857. the mery orgon] This is put licentiously for *orgons*, or *organs*. It is plain from *gon* in the next line that Chaucer meant to use this word as a Plural, from the LAT. GR. *Organa*. He uses it so in ver. 15602.

And while that the organs maden melodie.

Ver. 14876. Was cleped faire damoselle Pertelote] I suspect that *faire* has been added by some one who was unnecessarily alarmed for the metre.

After this verse the Editt. (except Ca. 1.) have the two following.

He fethered her a hundred times a day,
And she him pleaseth all that ever she may.

But as I found them in only two MSS. HA. and D., I was glad to leave them out as an injudicious interpolation. See below, ver. 15183.

Whoever wishes to see a great deal of uncertain etymology concerning the name *Pertelote*, may consult GL. V. in v. PARTALOT.

Ver. 14881. loken in every lith] *Locked* in every *limb*. The Editt. read *loking*. *Loken* is used by Occleve, in the first of his poems mentioned above in n. on ver. 5002.

Lefte was the Eries chamber dore unstoken,
To which he came, and fonde it was not *loken*.

Ver. 14885. My lefe is fare in lond] *Fare*, or *faren*; gone. So the best MSS. Ed. Ca. 2. reads—*fer*. It is not easy to determine which of these is the true reading, unless we should recover the old song, from which this passage seems to be quoted.

Ver. 14914. Away, quod she] I have here inadvertently followed the printed copies. But instead of *Away* the best MSS. read *Avoy*, which is more likely to have been used by Chaucer. The word occurs frequently in the French Fabliaux, &c. See T. ii. p. 243, 5. The Vocabulary, at the end of that volume, renders *Avoi*, *Helas*; but it seems to signify no more than our *Away!* The Italians use *Via!* in the same manner. *Roman de Troye*. MS.

Lors dit Thoas, *Avoi*, *avoi*,
Sire Achilles, vous dites mal.

Ver. 14946. Lo Caton] L. ii. Dist. 32. Somnia ne cures. I observe, by the way, that this distich is quoted by John of Salisbury, Polycrat. L. ii. c. 16. as a precept *viri sapientis*. In another place, L. vii. c. 9. he introduces his quotation of the first verse of Dist. 20. L. iii. in this manner. Ait *vel Cato*, *vel alius*, nam autor incertus est—.

Ver. 14971. Catapuce] *Catapuzza*, ITAL. *Catapuce*, FR. a kind of Spurge.

Ver. 14990. On of the gretest authors] Cicero, *de Divin.* L. i. c. 27. relates this and the following story; but in a contrary order; and with so many other differences, that one might be led to suspect that he was here quoted at second hand, if it were not usual with Chaucer, in these stories of familiar life, to throw in a number of natural circumstances, not to be found in his original authors.

Ver. 15116. Seint Kenelme] See his life in all the Editt. of the English *Golden Legende*.

Ver. 15147. Lo hire Andromacha] We must not look for this dream of Andromache in Homer. The first author who relates it is the fictitious Dares, c. xxiv. and Chaucer very probably took it from him, or from Guido de Columnis; or perhaps from Benoit de Sainte More, whose *Roman de Troye* I believe to have been that History of Dares, which Guido professes to follow, and has indeed almost entirely translated. A full discussion of this point, by a comparison of Guido's work with the *Roman de Troye*, would require more time and pains than I am inclined to bestow upon it. I will just mention a circumstance, which, if it can be verified, will bring the question to a much shorter decision. The *Versio Daretis Phrygii Gallico metro*, in the Ambrosian Library, of which Montfaucon speaks, *Diar. Ital.* p. 19. is undoubtedly the *Roman de Troye* by Benoit de Sainte More. The verses which are there quoted, differ no otherwise from the beginning of Benoit's Poem in MS. *Harl.* 4482. than as an old copy usually does from a more modern one. If therefore we can depend upon Montfaucon's judgment, that the MS. which he saw was written in the xiith Century, it will follow, that Benoit wrote near a hundred years before Guido, whose work, in all the MSS. that I have seen or heard of, is uniformly said to have been finished in the year 1287. There can be no doubt that the later of these two writers copied from the former.

Ver. 15169. so siker as *In principio*] See the note on ver. 256.

The next line is taken from the fabulous conference

between the Emperour Adrian and Secundus the Philosopher, of which some account has been given in n. on ver. 6777. *Quid est Mulier?* Hominis confusio, insaturabilis bestia &c.

Ver. 15196. Sithen March ended] I have ventured to depart from the MSS. and Editt. in this passage. They all read *began* instead of *ended*. At the same time MS. C. 1. has this note in the margin, "1. 2° die Mail." which plainly supposes that the 32 days are to be reckoned from the end of March. As the Vernal Equinox, according to our author's hypothesis, Discourse, &c. p. 1., happened on the 12th of March, the place of the sun (as described in ver. 15200, 1) in 22° of Taurus agrees very nearly with his true place on the 2d of May, the 53d day incl. from the Equinox. MS. C. reads thus,

Syn March began tway monthes and dayes two.

which brings us to the same day, but, I think, by a less probable correction of the faulty copies.

Ver. 15205. Twenty degrees] The reading of the greatest part of the MSS. is *Fourty degrees*. But that is evidently wrong; for Chaucer is speaking of the altitude of the Sun at, or about, Prime, i. e. six o'clock A. M. See ver. 15203. When the Sun is in 22° of Taurus, he is 21° high about ¾ after 6 A. M.

Ver. 15215. At the side of this verse is written in the margin of MS. C. *Petrus Comestor*, to intimate, I suppose, that this maxim is to be found in the *Historia Scholastica* of that author, who was a celebrated commentator on the Bible in the xiith Century. See Fabricius, Bib. Med. Ætat. in v.

Ver. 15221. A col fox] Skinner interprets this *a blackish fox*, as if it were *a cole fox*. Gl. Urr. It is much easier to refute this interpretation than to assign the true one. *Coll* appears from ver. 15389 to have been a common name for a dog. In composition, it is to be taken *in malam partem*, but in what precise sense I cannot say. See Chaucer's H. of F. B. iii. 187. *Coll-tregetour*—and in the Mirr. for Mag. Leg. of Glendour, fol. 127. b. *Colprophet* is plainly put for *a false, lying* prophet. Heywood has an Epigram *Of colepropheet*. Cent. vi. Ep. 89.

Thy prophesy poysonly to the pricke goth:
Colepropheet and *colepoyson* thou art both.

And in his Proverbial Dialogues, P. i. ch. x. he has the following lines.

Coll under canstyk she can plaie on both hands:
Dissimulation well she understands.

I will add an allusion of our author, in the Test. of Love, B. ii. fol. cccxxxiii. b. to a story of one *Collo*, which I cannot explain. "Busiris slewe his gestes, and he was slain of Hercules his geste. Hugest betrayshed many men, and of *Collo* was he betrayed."

Ver. 15240. But what that God] This passage has been translated into (rather elegant) Latin Iambics by Sir H. Savile, in his preface to Bradwardin, *de causâ Dei*, Lond. 1618. See the Testimonies &c. prefixed to Ed. Urr. Our author has discussed this question of the divine prescience &c. more at large in his Troilus, B. 4. from ver. 957 to ver. 1078. It is an addition of his own, of which there is no trace in the Philostrato of Boccace. See Essay &c. n. 62.

Ver. 15277. Phisiologus] He alludes, I suppose, to a book in Latin metre, entitled *Physiologus de naturis* XII *animalium*, by one Theobaldus whose age is not known. Fabr. Bib. Med. Æt. in v. THEOBALDUS. There is a copy of this work in MS. *Harl.* 3093, in which the ixth section *De Sirenis* begins thus:

Sirenæ sunt monstra maris resonantia magnis
Vocibus et modulis cantus formantia multis,
Ad quas incaute veniunt sæpissime nautæ,
Quæ faciunt somnum nimiâ dulcedine vocum &c.

See also R. R. ver. 680.

Ver. 15318. in Dan Burnel the asse] The story alluded to is in a poem of Nigel Wireker, entitled, *Burnellus, seu Speculum stultorum*, written in the time of Richard I. The substance of the story is in Gl. Urr. v. BURNELL. The Poem itself is in most collections of MSS. The printed copies are more rare, though there have been several editions of it. See Leyser, *Hist. Po. Med. Ævi*, p. 752, 3.

Burnell is used as a nickname for the ass in the Chester Whitsun Playes. MS. *Harl.* 2013. See the note on ver. 3539. In the pageant of Balaam, he says—

Go forth, *Burnell*, go forth, go.
What? the devil, my asse will not go.

and again, fol. 36. b.

Burnell, why begilest thou me?

The original word was, probably, *Brunell*, from its brown colour; as the Fox below, ver. 15340. is called *Russell*, from his red colour, I suppose.

Ver. 15341. by the gargat] The Editt. have changed this into *gorget*; but *gargat* is an old Fr. word. *Rom. de Rou.* MS. *Reg.* 4 C. xi.

O grant culteals e od granz cuignees
Lur unt *les gargates* trenchies.

Ver. 15353. O Gaufride] He alludes to a passage in the *Nova Poetria* of Geoffrey de Vinsauf, published not long after the death of Richard I. In this work the author has not only given instructions for composing in the different styles of Poetry, but also examples. His specimen of the plaintive kind of composition begins thus:

Neustria, sub clypeo regis defensa Ricardi,
Indefensa modo, gestu testare dolorem.
Exundent oculi lacrymas; exterminet ora
Pallor; connodet digitos tortura; cruentet
Interiora dolor, et verberet æthera clamor:
Tota peris ex morte sua. Mors non fuit ejus,
Sed tua; non una, sed publica mortis origo.
O Veneris lacrymosa dies! o sydus amarum!
Illa dies tua nox fuit, et Venus illa venenum.
Illa dedit vulnus, &c.

These lines are sufficient to shew the object, and the propriety, of Chaucer's ridicule. The whole poem is printed in Leyser's *Hist. Po. Med. Ævi.* p. 862—978.

Ver. 15451. As sayth my Lord] Opposite to this verse, in the margin of MS. C. 1. is written "Kantuar," which means, I suppose, that some Archbishop of Canterbury is quoted.

Ver. 15468. Sayd to another] I have observed, in the Discourse, &c. §. xxxvii. that in MSS. Ask. 1. 2. this line is read thus,

Seide unto *the nunne* as ye shul heer.

The following are the six forged lines, which the same MSS. exhibit by way of introduction to the Nonnes tale.

Madame, and I dorste, I wolde you pray
To telle a tale in fortheringe of our way.
Than mighte ye do unto us grete ese.
Gladly, sire, quoth she, so that I might plese
You and this worthy company,
And began hire tale riht thus ful sobrely.

Ver. 15514. out of releese] All the best MSS. concur in this reading, and therefore I have followed them, though I confess that I do not clearly understand the phrase; unless perhaps it mean *without release; without being ever released from their duty*. The common reading *withouten lees* is a genuine Saxon phrase. Butan leas; *absque falso*: without a lie.

Ver. 15518. Assembled is] This stanza is very like one in the Prioresses tale, ver. 13403—13410.

Ver. 15530. Sone of Eve.] See the Discourse, &c. §. xxxvii. n. 30.

Ver. 15536. Be thou min advocat] I have no better authority for the insertion of *thou* than Ed. Urr. The metre, perhaps, might be safe without it, considering *highe* as a dissyllable, but the verse would be very rough.

Ver. 15553. First wol I] The note upon this in the margin of MS. C. 1. is—"*Interpretatio* &c. *quam ponit Frater Jacobus Januensis in Legendâ aureâ.*" It has been observed in the Discourse, &c. that this whole tale is almost literally translated from the *Legenda aurea*.

Ver. 15654. louting] L. *latitantem*. Marg. MS. C. 1. from the SAX. *lutan*, or *lutian ; latere*.

Ver. 15675. On Lord, on faith] I have adopted this reading in preference to that of the best MSS.—O Lord, O Faith, O God &c.—in order to guard against the mistake, which the Editt. have generally fallen into, of considering *O*, in this passage, as the sign of the vocative case. *On* and *o* are used indifferently by Chaucer to signify *one*.

Ver. 15738. And of the miracle] I should have been glad to have met with any authority for leaving out this parenthesis of fourteen lines, which interrupts the narration so aukwardly, and to so little purpose. The substance of it is in the printed Editions of the Latin *Legenda aurea*, but appears evidently to have been at first a marginal observation, and to have crept into the text by the blunder of some copyist. Accordingly it is wanting in Caxton's *Golden Legende*, and, I suppose, in the French *Legende Dorée*, from which he translated. The author of the French version had either made use of an uncorrupted MS. or perhaps had been sagacious enough to discern and reject the interpolation.

Ver. 15783. And we also] It should have been *us*. I take notice of this, because Chaucer is very rarely guilty of such an offence against grammar.

Ver. 15855. Your cours is don] So all the MSS. In Ed. Urr. *don* is changed to *run ;* and I believe no modern poet would have joined any other verb with *cours*, especially after he had used *ydon* in the preceding line ; but I am not clear that Chaucer attended to such niceties.

In the latter part of this line, the best MSS. read—your faith *han ye* conserved,—and I know not by what negligence I omitted to follow them.

Ver. 15966. thin utter eyen] *Exterioribus oculis*. Marg. MS. C. 1.

Ver. 16023. five mile] So all the MSS. except E. which reads "*half a mile*." This latter reading must certainly be preferred, if we suppose that Chaucer meant to mark the interval between the conclusion of the Nonnes tale and the arrival of the Chanon. But it would be contrary to the general plan of our author's work, and to his practice upon other occasions, that the Host should suffer the company

To riden by the way, dombe as the ston,"

even for half a mile. I am therefore rather inclined to believe that *five mile* is the right reading, and that it was intended to mark the distance from *some place*, which we are now unable to determine with certainty, for want of the Prologue to the Nonnes tale.

I have sometimes suspected, that it was the intention of Chaucer to begin the journey *from* Canterbury with the Nonnes tale. In that case, *five mile* would mark very truly the distance from Canterbury to Boughton under blee. The circumstances too of the Chanons overtaking the pilgrims and looking, "as he had priked," or galloped, "miles three," would agree better with this supposition. It is scarce credible that he should have ridden after them from Southwark to Boughton without overtaking them ; and if he had, it must have been a very inadequate representation of his condition, to say that "it semed, he had priked *miles three*." Besides, the words of the Yeman, ver. 16056, 7.

——Now in the morwe tide
Out of your hostelrie I saw you ride——

seem to imply, that they were overtaken in the same morning in which they set out ; but it must have been considerably after noon before they reached Boughton from Southwark.

There is another way of solving these difficulties, by supposing that the Pilgrims lay upon the road, and that the Nonnes tale was the first of the second day's journey. It is most probable, that a great part of the company, not to mention their horses, would have had no objection to dividing the journey to Canterbury into two days ; but if they lay only five miles on this side of Boughton, I do not see how they coud spend the whole second day till evening (see ver. 17316) in travelling from thence to Canterbury.

I must take notice too, in opposition to my first hypothesis, that the manner, in which the Yeman expresses himself in ver. 16091, 2. seems to shew that he was riding *to* Canterbury.

Ver. 16156. For Cáton sayth] This precept of Cato is in L. 1. Dist. 17.

Ne cures si quis tacito sermone loquatur ;
Conscius ipse sibi de se putat omnia dici.

Ver. 16211. thurgh jupartie] So MS. C. 1. I have followed it, as it comes nearest to the true original of our word *jeopardie*, which our etymologists have sadly mistaken. They deduce it from *J'ai perdu*, or *Jeu perdu ;* but I rather believe it to be a corruption of *Jeu parti*. A *jeu parti* is properly a game, in which the chances are exactly even. See Froissart, v. i. c. 234. Ils n'estoient pas à *jeu parti* contre les François. v. ii. c. 9. si nous les voyons à *jeu parti*. From hence it signifies any thing uncertain, or hazardous. In the old French Poetry, the discussion of a Problem, where much might be said on both sides, was called a *Jeu parti*. See *Poesies du Roy de Navarre*, Chanson xlviii. and *Gloss.* in v. See also Du Cange in v. JOCUS PARTITUS.

Ver. 16288. The four spirites &c.] Compare Gower, *De Conf. Am.* B. iv. fol. 76. b.

Ver. 16306. Ascaunce] See the note on ver. 7327.

Ver. 16430. But all thing] This is taken from the *Parabolæ* of *Alanus de Insulis*, who died in 1294. See Leyser, *Hist. Po. Med. Ævi*, p. 1074.

Non teneas aurum totum quod splendet ut aurum,
Nec pulchrum pomum quodlibet esse bonum.

Ver. 16480. a preest, an annuellere] They were called *annuelleres*, not from their receiving a yearly stipend, as the Gloss. explains it, but from their being employed solely in singing *annuals*, or *anniversary Masses*, for the dead, without any cure of souls. See the Stat. 36 Edw. III. c. viii. where the *Chapelleins Parochiels* are distinguished from others *chantanz anuales, et a cure des almes nient entendantz*. They were both to receive yearly stipends, but the former was allowed to take six marks, and the latter only five. Compare Stat. 2 H. V. St. 2. c. 2. where the stipend of the *Chapellein Parochiel* is raised to eight marks, and that of the *Chapellein annueler* (he is so named in the statute) to seven.

Ver. 16915. the secree of secrees] He alludes to a treatise, entitled, *Secreta Secretorum*, which was supposed to contain the sum of Aristotle's instructions to Alexander. See Fabric. Bibl. Gr. v. ii. p. 167. It was very popular in the middle ages. Ægidius de Columnâ, a famous divine and bishop, about the latter end of the XIIIth Century, built upon it his book *De regimine principum*, of which our Occleve made a free translation in English verse, and addressed it to Henry V, while Prince of Wales. A part of Lydgate's translation of the *Secreta Secretorum* is printed in Ashmole's *Theat. Chem. Brit.* p. 397 He did not translate more than about half of it, being prevented by death. See MS. *Harl.* 2251. and Tanner, *Bib. Brit.* in v. LYDGATE. The greatest part of the viith Book of Gower's *Conf. Amant.* is taken from this supposed work of Aristotle.

Ver. 16919. As his book Senior] Ed. Urr. reads—As *in* his book—which I should have preferred to the common reading, if I had found it in any copy of better authority.

The book alluded to is printed in the *Theatrum Chemicum*, vol. v. p. 219. under this title, "Senioris Zadith fil. Hamuelis tabula Chymica." The story which follows of Plato and his disciple is there told, (p. 249.) with some variations, of Salomon. "Dixit *Salomon* rex, Recipe lapidem qui dicitur *Thitarios*—Dixit sapiens, Assigna mihi illum. Dixit, est corpus *magnesiæ*—Dixit, quid est *magnesia ?* Respondit, *magnesia* est *aqua*, composita," &c.

Ver. 16961. Do him come forth] So MSS. Ask. 1. 2. and some others. The common reading is—Do him *comfort*. The alteration is material, not only as it gives a clearer sense, but as it intimates to us, that the narrator of a tale

was made to come out of the crowd, and to take his place within hearing of the Host, during his narration. Agreeably to this notion, when the Host calls upon Chaucer, ver. 13629, he says,

> Approche nere, and loke up merily.
> Now ware you, Sires, and let this man have place.

It was necessary that the Host, who was to be "juge and reportour" of the tales (ver. 816), should hear them all distinctly. The others might hear as much as they coud, or as they chose of them. It would have required the lungs of a Stentor, to speak audibly to a company of thirty people trotting on together in a road of the fourteenth Century.

Ver. 16965. to slepen by *the morwe*] This must be understood generally for *the day-time;* as it was then afternoon. It has been observed in the Discourse &c. §. xiii. that, in this episode of the Coke, no notice is taken of his having told a tale before.

Ver. 16991. wol ye just at the fan?] Some MSS. read—ram. The sense of both words is the same. The thing meant is the *Quintaine*, which is called a *fan*, or *van*, from its turning round like a weather-cock. See Du Cange in v. VANA; Menestrier *sur les tournois*, as quoted by Menage, *Dict. Etymol.* in v. QUINTAINE; and Kennet's *Paroch. Antiq.*

Ver. 16993. win of ape] This is the reading of MSS. HA. D. E. and Ed. Ca. 1. and I believe the true one. The explanation in the Gloss. of this and the preceding passage, from Mr. Speght, is too ridiculous to be repeated. *Wine of ape* I understand to mean the same as *vin de singe* in the old *Calendrier des Bergiers*. Sign. l. ii. b. The author is treating of Physiognomy, and in his description of the four temperaments he mentions, among other circumstances, the different effects of wine upon them. The Cholerick, he says, *a vin de Lyon; cest a dire, quant a bien beu veult tanser noyser et battre*—The Sanguine, *a vin de Singe; quant a plus beu tant est plus joyeux*—In the same manner the Phlegmatic is said to have *vin de mouton*, and the Melancholick *vin de porceau.*

I find the same four animals applied to illustrate the effects of wine in a little Rabbinical tradition, which I shall transcribe here from Fabric. Cod. Pseudepig. V. T. vol. i. p. 275. *Vineas plantanti Noacho Satanam se junxisse memorant, qui, dum Noa vites plantaret, mactaverit apud illas* ovem, leonem, simiam *et* suem: *Quod principio potûs vini homo sit instar* ovis, *vinum sumptum efficiat ex homine* leonem, *largius haustum mutet eum in saltantem* simiam, *ad ebrietatem infusum transformet illum in pollutam et prostratam* suem. See also *Gesta Romanorum*, c. 159. where a story of the same purport is quoted from Josephus, *in libro de casu rerum naturalium.*

Ver. 16999. a faire chivachee] A fair *expedition*. See the note on ver. 85. The common Editt. read—*chevisance.*

Ver. 17112. Take any brid] This passage is too like one which has occurred before in the Squieres tale, ver. 10925. The thought is plainly taken from Boethius, L. iii. Met. 2. See also *Rom. de la R.* ver. 14717—34.

Ver. 17124. Let take a cat] This is imitated from the *Rom. de la R.* ver. 14825.

Ver. 17130. Lo, here hath kind] So MSS. Ask. 1. 2. The common Editt. read, *lust*. *Kind* is *nature*. See the next line but one, and ver. 10922, 4.

Ver. 17132. A she-wolf] This is also from the *Rom. de la R.* ver. 8142.

> Tout ainsi comme fait la louve,
> Que sa folie tant empire,
> Qu'elle prent de tous loups le pire.

Ver. 17173. or any thefe] *Any* is from conjecture only, instead of *a*, the reading of all the MSS. that I have consulted. The reading of Ed. Urr. is—or *elles* a thefe—whether from authority or conjecture I cannot tell; but even as a conjecture I should have adopted it in preference to my own, if I had taken notice of it in time.

Ver. 17278. My sone, thy tonge] In the *Rom. de la R.* ver. 7399. this precept is quoted from *Ptolomée*,

> Au commencer *de l'Almageste.*

See the note on ver. 5764.

Ver. 17281. The firste vertue] This precept is also quoted in the *Rom. de la R.* ver. 7415. from Cato. It is extant L. i. Dist. 3.

> Virtutem primam esse puta compescere linguam.

Ver. 17308. be non auctour newe] This seems to be from Cato. L. i. Dist. 12.

> Rumores fuge, ne incipias *novus auctor* haberi.

It looks as if Chaucer read,

> *Rumoris* fuge ne incipias novus auctor haberi.

Ver. 17316. Foure of the clok] See the Discourse &c. §. xii.

Ver. 17321. Therwith the mones exaltation, In mene Libra, alway gan ascend] This is a very obscure passage. Some of the MSS. read—I mene Libra. According to the reading which I have followed, *exaltation* is not to be considered as a technical term, but as signifying simply *rising;* and the sense will be, *that the moon's rising, in the middle of Libra, was continually ascending*, &c.

If *exaltation* be taken in its technical meaning, as explained in the note on ver. 6284, it will be impossible to make any sense of either of the readings: for the *exaltation of the moon* was not in *Libra*, but in *Taurus*. *Kalendrier des Bergiers*. Sign. i. ult. Mr. Speght, I suppose, being aware of this, altered *Libra* into *Taurus;* but he did not consider, that the Sun, which has just been said to be *descending*, was at that time in *Taurus*, and that consequently *Taurus* must also have been *descending.*

Libra therefore should by no means be parted with. Being in that part of the Zodiac which is nearly opposite to *Taurus*, the place of the Sun, it is very properly represented as *ascending* above the horizon toward the time of the Sun's setting. If any alteration were to be admitted, I should be for reading—

> Therwith *Saturnes* exaltation,
> I mene Libra, alway gan ascende—

The exaltation of *Saturn* was in *Libra*. *Kalendrier des Bergers*. Sign. K. i.

Ver. 17354. I cannot geste, rom, ram, ruf] This is plainly a contemptuous manner of describing *alliterative poetry;* and the Person's prefatory declaration that "he is a Southern man," would lead one to imagine, that compositions in that style were, at this time, chiefly confined to the Northern provinces. It was observed long ago by William of Malmesbury, l. iii. *Pontif. Angl.* that the language of the North of England was so harsh and unpolished, as to be scarce intelligible to a Southern man. *Quod propter viciniam barbararum gentium, et propter remotionem regum quondam Anglorum modo Normannorum contigit, qui magis ad Austrum quam ad Aquilonem diversati noscuntur.* From the same causes we may presume, that it was often long before the improvements in the poetical art, which from time to time were made in the South, coud find their way into the North; so that there the hobbling alliterative verse might still be in the highest request, even after Chaucer had established the use of the Heroic metre in this part of the island. Dr. Percy has quoted an alliterative poem by a Cheshire man on the battle of Flodden in 1513, and he has remarked "that all such poets as used this kind of metre, retained along with it many peculiar Saxon idioms." Essay on Metre of P. P. This may perhaps have been owing to their being generally inhabitants of the Northern counties, where the old Saxon idiom underwent much fewer and slower alterations, than it did in the neighbourhood of the capital.

To geste here is *to relate gestes*. In ver. 13961. he has called it *to telle in geste*. Both passages seem to imply that *Gestes* were chiefly written in alliterative verse, but the latter passage more strongly than this. After the Host has told Chaucer, that he "shall no longer *rime*," he goes on—

"Let see wher thou canst tellen ought *in geste*,
Or tellen *in prose* somwhat at the leste—"

Geste there seems to be put for a species of composition which was neither *Rime* nor *Prose*; and what that coud be, except *alliterative metre*, I cannot guess. At the same time I must own, that I know no other passage which authorizes the interpretation of *Geste* in this confined sense. In the H. of F. ii. 114. Chaucer speaks of himself as making—

"bokes, songes, ditees
In *rime*, or elles in *cadence*."

where *cadence*, I think, must mean a species of poetical composition distinct from riming verses. The name might be properly enough applied to the metre used in the *Ormulum* (see the Essay, &c. n. 52.) but no work of Chaucer in any such metre, without rime, has come within my observation.

Ver. 17378. had the wordes] This is a French phrase. It is applied to the Speaker of the Commons in *Rot. Parl.* 51 E. III. n. 87. Mons. Thomas de Hungerford, Chivaler, qi *avoit les paroles* pur les Communes d'Angleterre en cest Parlement, &c.

P. 148. col. 1. l. 60. forlete sinne or that sinne forlete hem] The same thought occurs, by way of precept, at the end of the Doctour's tale, ver. 12220.

Forsaketh sinne or sinne you *forsake*.

P. 154. col. 1. l. 19. sayth Moyses] I cannot tell where. Perhaps there may be some such passage in the Rabbinical histories of Moses, which the learned Gaulmin published in the last century (Paris, 1629, 8vo.) and which, among other traditions, contain that alluded to by S. Jude, Ep. ver. 9.

P. 154. col. 1. l. 54. in the *thurrok*] The Editt. have changed this word, in this place, into *timber*, though, in another place, p. 182. col. 2. l. 52. they have left it, and Mr. Speght explains it to mean *an heap*. It is a Saxon word, which the Glossaries render *cymba*, *caupolus*; originally perhaps *campulus*, as it was sometimes written. Du Cange, in v. CAUPULUS. It seems to have signified any sort of *keeled* vessel, and from thence, what we call, *the hold* of a ship. The following explanation of it from an old book, entitled "*Our Ladyes mirroure*" (Lond. 1530. fol. 57. b.) will fully justify Chaucer's use of it in both places, in the first literally, and in the second metaphorically. "Ye shall understande that there ys a place in the bottome of a shyppe, wherin ys gathered all the fylthe that cometh into the shyppe—and it is called in some contre of thys londe a *thorrocke*. Other calle yt an *hamron*, and some calle yt the *bulcke* of the shyppe." I know not what to make of *hamron*.

P. 155. col. 2. l. 14. outragious array of clothing] What follows should be read carefully by any Antiquary, who may mean to write *de Re Vestiariâ* of the English nation in the XIVth Century.

P. 169. col. 1. l. 28 so high doctrine I lete to divines] See before, ver. 17366—71. and below, p. 171. col. 1. l. 54. "The exposition of this—I betake to the maisters of Theologie." The secular clergy, in the time of Chaucer, being generally very ignorant, it would not have been in character, I suppose, to represent the Persone as a deep divine, though a very pious, worthy Priest. The Frere, whose brethren had the largest share of the learning which was then in fashion, is made to speak with great contempt of the Parochial Pastors, ver. 7590.

"This every *leced* Vicar and Person
Can say &c."

And yet in the Person's Character, ver. 402. we are told, that—

"He was also a *lerned* man, a *clerk*."

It may be doubted therefore, whether in these passages Chaucer may not speak for himself, forgetting or neglecting the character of the real speaker.

P. 172. col. 2. l. 8. Now preye I to hem alle &c.] What follows being found, with some small variations, in all complete MSS. (I believe) of the Canterbury Tales, and in both Caxton's Editions, which were undoubtedly printed from MSS. there was no pretence to leave it out in this Edition, however difficult it may be to give any satisfactory account of it.

I must first take notice, that this passage in MS. Ask. 1. is introduced by these words—

Here taketh the maker his leve.

and is concluded by these—

Here endeth the Personnys Tale.

In MS. Ask. 2. there is a similar introduction and conclusion in Latin; at the beginning,—*Hic capit auctor licentiam*—and at the end,—*Explicit narratio Rectoris, et ultima inter narrationes hujus libri de quibus composuit Chaucer, cujus anime propicietur Deus. Amen.*

These two MSS. therefore may be considered as agreeing in substance with those MSS. mentioned in the Discourse, &c. §. xlii. in which this passage makes part of the Persones Tale. One of them is described by Hearne, in his letter to Bagford, App. to R. G. p. 661, 2.

In Edit. Ca. 2. as quoted by Ames, p. 56. it is clearly separated from the Persones Tale, and entitled,

The Prayer.

In the MSS. in which it is also separated from the Persones tale, I do not remember to have seen it distinguished by any title, either of *Prayer* or *Revocation*; or *Retractation*, as it is called in the Preface to Ed. Urry. If we believe what is said in p. 172. col. 2. l. 22. Chaucer had written a distinct piece entitled *his Retractions*, in which he had revoked his blameable compositions.

The just inference from these variations in the MSS. is perhaps, that none of them are to be at all relied on; that different Copyists have given this passage the title that pleased them best, and have attributed it to the Persone or to Chaucer, as the matter seemed to them to be most suitable to the one or the other.

Mr. Hearne, whose greatest weakness was not his incredulity, has declared his suspicion, "that the Revocation, meaning this whole passage, is not genuine, but that it was made by the Monks." App. to R. G. p. 603. I cannot go quite so far. I think, if the Monks had set about making a Revocation for Chaucer to be annexed to the Canterbury Tales, they would have made one more in form. The same objection lies to the supposal that it was made by himself.

The most probable hypothesis which has occurred to me, for the solution of these difficulties, is to suppose, that the beginning of this passage, except the words, *or reden it* in col. 2. l. 9. and the end make together the genuine conclusion of the Persones tale, and that the middle part which I have inclosed between hooks is an interpolation.

It must be allowed, I think, as I have observed before in the Discourse, &c. §. xlii. that the appellation of "litel tretise" suits better with the Persones tale taken singly, than with the whole work. The doubt expressed in col. 2. l. 12. "if there be any thing that displeseth &c." is very agreeable to the manner in which the Persone speaks in his Prologue, ver. 17366. See the note on p. 169. col. 1. l. 28. The mention of "verray penance, confession and satisfaction" in p. 172. col. 2. l. 39, seems to refer pointedly to the subject of the speaker's preceding discourse; and the title given to Christ in p. 172. col. 2. l. 42, "Preste of all Prestes" seems peculiarly proper in the mouth of a Preest.

So much for those parts which may be supposed to have originally belonged to the Persone. With respect to the middle part, I think it not improbable, that Chaucer might be persuaded by the Religious who attended him in his last illness, to revoke, or retract, certain of his works; or at least that they might give out, that he had made such Retractions as they thought proper. In either case, it is possible that the same zeal might think it expedient to join the substance of these Retractions to the Canterbury Tales, the antidote to the poison; and might accordingly procure the present interpolation to be made in the Epilogue to the Persones tale, taking care at the same time, by the insertion of the words "*or reden it*" in col. 2. l. 9. to

convert that Epilogue from an address of the Persone to his *hearers* into an address of Chaucer to his *readers*.

But, leaving these very uncertain speculations, I will say a few words upon those *enditinges of worldly vanitees*, which are here supposed to have sitten heavy on our author's conscience.

P. 172. col. 2. l. 23. the boke of Troilus] It has been said in the Essay, &c. n. 62. that the Troilus is borrowed from the Filostrato of Boccace. This is evident not only from the Fable and Characters, which are the same in both poems, but also from a number of passages in the English which are literally translated from the Italian. At the same time there are several long passages, and even episodes, in the Troilus, of which there are no traces in the Filostrato. Of these therefore it may be doubted, whether Chaucer has added them out of his own invention, or taken them either from some completer copy of Boccace's poem than what we have in print, or from some copy interpolated by another hand. He speaks of himself as a translator *out of Latin*, B. ii. 14. and in two passages he quotes his author by the name of *Lollius*, B. i. 394—421, and B. v. 1652. The latter passage is in the Filostrato, but the former, in which the 102d Sonnet of Petrarch is introduced, is not. What he says of having translated *out of Latin* need not make any difficulty, as the *Italian* language was commonly called *Latino volgare* (see the quotation from the Theseida, Discourse, &c. n. 2.) and Lydgate (Prol. to Boccace) expressly tells us, that Chaucer translated—"a boke which called is *Trophe*,

In *Lombard tonge*, as men may rede and see."

How *Boccace* should have acquired the name of *Lollius*, and the *Filostrato* the title of *Trophe*, are points which I confess myself unable to explain.

Ibid. l. 24. the boke of Fame] Chaucer mentions this among his works in the Leg. of G. W. ver. 417. He wrote it while he was Comptroller of the Custom of wools, &c. (see B. ii. ver. 144—8.) and consequently after the year 1374. See App. to Pref. C.

Ibid. l. 24. the boke of five and twenty Ladies] This is the reading of all the MSS. If it be genuine, it affords a strong proof that this enumeration of Chaucer's works was not drawn up by himself; as there is no ground for believing that *the Legende of Good Women* ever contained, or was intended to contain, the histories of *five and twenty* Ladies. See the note on ver. 4481. It is possible however that xxv may have been put by mistake for xix.

Ibid. l. 25. the boke of the Duchesse] See the note on ver. 4467. One might have imagined that this poem, written upon a particular occasion, was in all probability an original composition; but upon comparing the portrait of a beautiful woman, which M. de la Ravaliere (Poes. du R. de N. Gloss. v. Belle) has cited from MS. *du Roi*, N° 7612. with Chaucer's description of his heroine (ver. 817, *et seq.*) I find that several lines in the latter are literally translated from the former. I should not therefore be surprised, if, upon a further examination of that MS. it should appear, that our author, according to his usual practice, had borrowed a considerable part of his work from some French poet.

Ibid. l. 25. the boke of Seint Valentines day &c.] In the Editt. *the Assemblee of Foules*. Chaucer himself in the Leg. of G. W. ver. 419. calls it *the Parlement of Foules*. See the note on ver. 1920. and App. to Pref. C. note [e].

Ibid. l. 27. the tales of Canterbury &c.] If we suppose, that this passage was written by Chaucer himself, to make part of the conclusion of his Canterbury Tales, it must appear rather extraordinary, that he should mention those tales in this general manner, and in the midst of his other works. It would have been more natural to have placed them either at the beginning or at the end of his catalogue.

Ibid. l. 28. the boke of the Leon] This book is also ascribed to Chaucer by Lydgate, Prol. to Boccace, but no MS. of it has hitherto been discovered. It may possibly have been a translation of *Le dit du Lion*, a poem of Guillaume de Machaut, composed in the year 1342. Acad. des Insc. t. xx. p. 379. 408. Some lines from this poem, as I apprehend, are quoted in the Glossary to *Poes. du Roi de N.* v. Arrousers. Bacheler.

Whether we suppose this list of Chaucer's exceptionable works to have been drawn up by himself, or by any other person, it is unaccountable that his translation of the *Roman de la Rose* should be omitted. If he translated the whole of that very extraordinary composition, as is most probable, he coud scarce avoid being guilty of a much greater licentiousness, in sentiment as well as diction, than we find in any of his other writings. His translation, as we have it, breaks off at ver. 5370. of the original (ver. 5810. Ed. Urr.) and beginning again at ver. 11253. ends imperfect at ver. 13105. In the latter part we have a strong proof of the negligence of the first editor, who did not perceive that two leaves in his MS. were misplaced. The passage from ver. 7013 to ver. 7062 incl. and the passage from ver. 7257 to ver. 7304. incl. should be inserted after ver. 7160. The later Editors have all copied this, as well as many other blunders of less consequence, which they must have discovered, if they had consulted the French original.

A Bacheler, who dances with Franchise, is said to resemble

"The Lordes sonne of Wyndesore."
R. R. ver. 1250.

This seems to be a compliment to the young Princes in general, rather than to any particular son of Edward III, who is certainly meant by *the Lord of Windsor*. In the French it is simply—Il sembloit estre *filz de Roy*.

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE.

v. 1—104

MANY menne sain that in sweveninges,
There n'is but fables and lesinges:
But menne may some sweven seene,
Which hardely that false ne been,
But afterward ben apparaunt:
This may I drawe to warraunt
An authour that hight Macrobes,
That halte not dreames false ne lees,
But undoth us the avisioun,
That whilom mette king Cipioun.
And who so sayth, or weneth it be
A jape, or else nicete
To wene that dreames after fall,
Let who so liste a foole me call.
For this trow I, and say for me,
That dreames signifiaunce be
Of good and harme to many wightes,
That dreamen in hir sleep a nightes
Full many thinges covertly,
That fallen after all openly.
Within my twentie yeere of age,
When that love taketh his courage
Of younge folke, I wente soone
To bed, as I was wont to doone:
And fast I slept, and in sleeping,
Me mette such a swevening,
That liked me wondrous wele,
But in that sweven is never a dele
That it n'is afterward befall,
Right as this dreame woll tell us all.
Now this dreame woll I rime aright,
To make your heartes gay and light:
For love it prayeth, and also
Commaundeth me that it be so.
And if there any aske me,
Whether that it be he or she,
How this booke which is here
Shall hatte, that I rede you here:
It is the Romaunt of the Rose,
In which all the art of love I close.
The matter faire is of to make,
God graunt me in gree that she it take
For whom that it begonnen is,
And that is she, that hath ywis
So mokel prise, and thereto she
So worthie is beloved to be,
That she wel ought of prise and right,
Be cleped Rose of everie wight.
That it was May me thoughte tho,
It is five yere or more ago,
That it was May, thus dreamed me,
In time of love and jolitie,
That all thing ginneth waxen gay:
For there is neither buske nor hay
In May, that it n'ill shrouded bene,
And it with newe leves wrene:
These woodes eke recoveren grene,
That drie in winter ben to sene,
And the erth waxeth proud withall,
For swote dewes that on it fall,
And the poore estate forget,
In which that winter had it set:
And than become the ground so proude,
That it wol have a newe shroude,
And maketh so queint his robe and faire,
That it had hewes an hundred paire,
Of grasse and floures, of Inde and Pers,
And many hewes full divers:
That is the robe I mean ywis,
Through which the ground to praisen is.
The birdes, that han left hir song,
While they han suffred cold full strong,
In wethers grille, and derke to sight,
Ben in May for the Sunne bright,
So glad, that they shew in singing,
That in hir heart is such liking,
That they mote singen and ben light:
Than doth the nightingale her might,
To maken noyse, and singen blithe:
Than is blisfull many a sithe,
The chelaundre, and the popingaye,
Than younge folke entenden aye,
For to ben gay and amorous,
The time is then so savorous.
Harde is his heart that loveth nought
In May, whan all this mirth is wrought,
Whan he may on these braunches here
The smalle birdes singen clere
Hir blisfull swete song piteous,
And in this season delitous:
When love affirmeth all thing,
Me thought one night, in my sleeping,
Right in my bed full readyly,
That it was by the morrow early,
And up I rose, and gan me cloth,
Anone I wysshe mine hondes both,
A silver needle forth I drow,
Out of an aguiler queint ynow,
And gan this needle thread anone,
For out of towne me list to gone,
The sound of birdes for to heare
That on the buskes singen cleare,
In the swete season that lefe is,
With a thred basting my slevis,

Alone I went in my playing,
The smal foules song hearkening,
That payned hem full many a paire,
To sing on bowes blossomed faire:
Jolife and gay, full of gladnesse,
Toward a river gan I me dresse,
That I heard renne faste by,
For fairer playeng none saw I
Than playen me by the rivere:
For from an hill that stood there nere,
Come downe the stream full stiffe and bold,
Clere was the water, and as cold
As any well is, sooth to saine,
And somedele lasse it was than Saine,
But it was straiter, weleaway,
And never saw I ere that day,
The water that so wele liked me,
And wonder glad was I to se
That lusty place, and that river:
And with that water that ran so clere,
My face I wysshe, tho saw I wele,
The bottome ypaved everidele
With gravel, full of stones shene,
The meadowes softe, sote, and grene,
Beet right upon the water side,
Full clere was than the morowe tide,
And full attempre out of drede,
Tho gan I walken thorow the mede,
Downward aye in my playing,
The rivers side coösting.
And when I had a while ygone,
I saw a garden right anone,
Full long and broad, and everidele
Enclosed was, and walled wele,
With hie walles enbatailed,
Portrayed without, and well entayled
With many riche portraitures,
And both the images and peintures,
Can I beholde besely,
And I woll tell you readyly,
Of thilke images the semblaunce,
As farre as I have remembraunce.
Amidde saw I Hate stonde,
That for her wrath and yre and onde,
Seemed to be a moveresse,
An angry wight, a chideresse,
And ful of gile, and fell courage,
By semblaunt was that ilke image,
And she was nothing wele araide,
But like a wode woman afraide,
Yfrounced foule was her visage,
And grinning for dispitous rage,
Her nose snorted up for tene,
Full hidous was she for to sene,
Full foule and rustie was she this,
Her head ywrithen was ywis
Full grimly with a great towaile.
An image of another entayle,
Alifte halte was her fast by,
Her name above her head saw I,
And she was called Felony.
Another image, that Villany
Ycleped was, saw I and fonde
Upon the wall on her right honde.
Villany was like somedele
That other image, and trusteth wele
She seemed a wicked creature,
By countenaunce in portreiture,
She seemed be full despitous,
And eke full proude and outragious.
Well coud he paint I undertake,
That such an image coude make:
Full foule and chorlych seemed she,
And eke villainous for to be,
And little coulde of norture,
To worship any creature.
And next was painted Covetise,
That eggeth folke in many a gise,
To take and yeve right nought againe,
And great treasoures up to laine.
And that is she, that for usure
Leneth to many a creature
The lasse for the more winning,
So covetous is her brenning,
And that is she for pennies fele,
That teacheth for to robbe and stele
These theeves, and these smale harlotes,
And that is routhe, for by hir throtes,
Full many one hongeth at the last:
She maketh folke compasse and cast
To taken other folkes thing,
Through robberie, or miscoveting.
And that is she that maketh treachours,
And she maketh false pleadours,
That with hir termes and hir domes,
Done maidens, children, and eke gromes,
Her heritage to forgo:
Full crooked were her hondes two,
For covetise is ever woode,
To gripen other folkes goode.
Covetise, for her winning,
Full lefe hath other mennes thing.
Another image set saw I,
Nexte Covetise fast by,
And she was cleped Avarice,
Full foule in painting was that vice,
Full sad and caitife was she eke,
And also grene as any leke,
So evil hewed was her colour,
Her seemed to have lived in langour,
She was like thing for hunger dead,
That lad her life onely by bread
Kneden with eisell strong and egre,
And thereto she was leane and megre,
And she was clad full poorely,
All in an olde torne courtpy,
As she were all with dogges torne,
And both behind and eke beforne
Clouted was she beggerly.
A mantle honge her faste by,
Upon a benche weake and small,
A burnette cote hong there withall,
Furred with no minevere,
But with a furre rough of heere,
Of lambe skinnes heavy and blake,
It was so old I undertake.
For Avarice to cloath her wele,
Ne hasteth her never a dele,
For certainly it were her loth
To wearen of that ilke cloth,
And if it were forweared, she
Woulde have full great nicete
Of clothing, er she bought her newe,
All were it bad of woll and hewe.
This Avarice held in her hand,
A purse that honge by a band,
And that she hid and bond so strong,
Men must abide wonder long,
Out of the purse er ther come aught,
For that ne commeth in her thought,

It was not certaine her entent,
That fro that purse a peny went.
And by that image nigh ynough,
Was peinted Envy, that never lough,
Nor never well in her heart ferde
But if she either saw or herde
Some great mischaunce, or great disease,
Nothing ne may so much her please
As mischeife and misaventure,
Or when she seeth discomfiture
Upon any worthy man fall,
Than liketh her right well withall.
She is full glad in hir courage,
If she see any great linage
Be brought to naught in shamefull wise:
And if a man in honour rise,
Or by his wit, or by his prowesse,
Of that hath she great heavinesse,
For trusteth well she goeth nie wood,
When any chaunce happeth good.
Envy is of such cruelte,
That fayth ne trouth holdeth she,
To friend ne fellow, bad or good.
Ne she hath kinne none of her blood
That she n'is full hir enemie,
She nolde, I dare saine hardely
Her owne father fared wele,
And sore abieth she everie dele
Her malice, and her male talent:
For she is in so great turment
And hate such, when folke doth good,
That nye she melteth for pure wood,
Her hert kerveth and so breaketh
That God the people well awreaketh.
Envy ywis shall never let,
Some blame upon the folke to set.
I trowe that if Envy ywis,
Knew the beste man that is,
On this side or beyond the see,
Yet somewhat lacken him would she:
And if he were so hende and wise,
That she ne might all abate his prise,
Yet would she blame his worthinesse,
Or by her wordes make it lesse.
I sawe Envy in that painting,
Had a wonderfull looking,
For she ne looked but awrie,
Or overwhart, all baggingly.
And she had a foule usage,
She might looke in no visage
Of man ne woman, forth right plaine,
But shette her one eye for disdaine,
So for envie brenned shee
When she might any man see
That faire, or worthy were, or wise,
Or else stood in folkes prise.
Sorow was painted next Envy
Upon that wall of masonry:
But well was seene in her colour
That she had lived in langour:
Her seemed to have the jaundice,
Not halfe so pale was Avarice,
Ne nothing like of leannesse,
For sorowe, thought, and great distresse,
That she had suffred daie and night,
Made her yellow, and nothing bright:
Full sad, pale, and megre also,
Was never wight yet half so wo
As that her seemed for to be,
Nor so fulfilled with yre as she,
I trow that no wight might her please
Nor doe that thing that might her ease,
Nor she ne would her sorow slake,
Nor comfort none unto her take,
So depe was her wo begonne,
And eke her heart in anger ronne,
A sorowfull thing wel seemed she:
Nor she had nothing slowe be
For to-scratchen all her face
And for to-rent in many place
Her clothes, and for to teare her swire,
As she that was fulfilled of yre,
And all to-torne lay eke her heere
About her shoulders, here and there,
As she that had it all to-rent
For anger and for male talent.
And eke I tell you certainly
How that she wept full tenderly:
In worlde n'is wight so hard of heart
That had seene her sorowes smart
That nolde have had of her pite,
So wo begone a thing was she.
She all to-dasht her selfe for wo
And smote togider her hands two,
To sorrow was she full ententife,
That wofull retchelesse caitife
Her rought little of playing,
Or of clipping or kissing;
For who so sorrowfull is in heart
Him luste not to play ne start,
Nor for to dauncen, ne to sing,
Ne may his heart in temper bring
To make joy on even or morrow,
For joy is contrarie unto sorrow.
Elde was painted after this,
That shorter was a foot ywis
Than she was wont in her yonghede,
Unneth her selfe she might fede,
So feeble and eke so old was she
That faded was all her beaute.
Full salow was waxen her colour,
Her head for hore was white as flour,
Ywis great qualme ne were it none,
Ne sinne, although her life were gone.
All woxen was her body unwelde
And drie and dwined all for elde,
A foule forwelked thing was she
That whilom round and soft had be,
Her heeres shoken fast withall
As from her hedde they woulde fall:
Her face frounced and forpined,
And both her hondes lorne fordwined:
So old she was that she ne went
A foot, but it were by potent.
The time that passeth night and daye,
And restlesse travayleth aye,
And stealeth from us so privyly,
That to us seemeth sikerly
That it in one point dwelleth ever,
And certes it ne resteth never,
But goeth so fast, and passeth aye,
That there n'is man that thinke maye
What time that now present is,
Asketh at these clerkes this,
For menne thinke it readily
Three times been passed by
The time that may not sojourne
But goth, and may never retourne,
As water that down runneth aye
But never droppe returne may:

There may nothing as time endure,
Metall, nor earthly creature,
For all thing it frette and shall,
The time eke that chaungeth all,
And all doth waxe, and fostred be,
And all thing destroyeth he.
The time that eldeth our auncestours
And eldeth kinges and emperours,
And that us all shall overcommen
Er that death us shall have nomen,
The time that hath all in welde
To elden folke, had made her elde
So inly, that to my weting
She might helpe her selfe nothing,
But tourned ayen unto childhede ;
She had nothing her selfe to lede
Ne wit ne pithe in her hold
More than a childe of two yere old.
But nathelesse I trow that she
Was faire sometime, and fresh to se,
When she was in her rightfull age :
But she was past all that passage
And was a doted thing becommen :
A furred cappe on had she nomen ;
Well had she clad her selfe and warme,
For cold might els doen her harme,
These olde folke have alway cold,
Hir kind is such, when they been old.
Another thing was down there writ,
That seemed like an ipocrite,
And it was cleped Pope holy,
That ilke is she, that privily
Ne spared never a wicked deed,
When men of her taken none heed,
And maketh her outward precious,
With pale visage and piteous,
And seemeth a simple creature,
But ther n'is no misadventure,
That she ne thinketh in her courage :
Ful like to her was thilke image,
That maked was like her semblaunce,
She was ful simple of countenaunce.
And she was clothed and eke shod,
As she were for the love of God
Y-olden to religion,
Such seemed her devotion.
A psalter held she fast in hond,
And busily she gan to fond
To make many a faint prayere,
To God, and to his saintes dere :
Ne she was gay, fresh, ne jolife,
But seemed to be full ententife
To goode workes, and to faire,
And thereto she had on an haire.
Ne certes she was fatte nothing
But seemed werie for fasting,
Of colour pale and dead was she,
From her the gates aie warned be
Of Paradise, that blisfull place,
For such folke maken leane hir grace :
As Christ sayth in his Evangile,
To get hem prise in towne a while,
And for a little glorie vaine,
They lesen God and eke his raigne.
And alderlast of everichone,
Was painted Povert all alone,
That not a peny had in hold,
Although she her clothes sold,
And though she shuld an honged be,
For naked as a worme was she,
And if the weather stormie were,
For cold she shuld have died there.
She ne had on but a straite old sacke,
And many a cloute on it there stacke,
This was her cote, and her mantele,
No more was there never a dele
To cloath her with ; I undertake,
Great leser hadde she to quake :
And she was put, that I of talke,
Ferre fro these other, up in an halke,
There lurked and there coured she,
For poore thing, where so it be,
Is shamefast, and despised aie :
Accursed may well be that daie,
That poore man conceived is,
For God wote all to seld ywis
Is any poore man well yfed,
Or well arrayed or ycled,
Or well beloved, in such wise,
In honour that he may arise.
All these thinges well aviscd,
As I have you er this devised,
With gold and azure over all,
Depainted were upon the wall.
Square was the wall, and high somdele
Enclosed, and ybarred wele,
In stead of hedge, was that gardin,
Come never shepherde therein :
Into that gardin, well ywrought,
Who so that me coud have brought,
By ladders or else by degree,
It would well have liked mee,
For such solace, such joy, and pleie
I trow that never man ne seie,
As was in that place delicious :
The gardin was not daungerous,
To herborow birdes many one,
So rich a yere was never none
Of birdes song, and braunches grene,
Therein were birdes mo I wene,
Than been in all the realme of Fraunce :
Full blisfull was the accordaunce,
Of swete pitous song they made,
For all this worlde it ought glade.
And I my selfe so merry ferde,
Whan I her blisfull songes herde,
That for an hundred pound would I,
If that the passage openly
Had be unto me free
That I couthe entren for to see
Thassemble (God keepe it fro care)
Of birdes, whiche therein ware,
That songen through hir merry throtes,
Daunces of love, and merry notes.
When I thus heard the foules sing,
I fell fast in a waymenting,
By which art, or by what engin,
I might come into that gardin,
But way I couthe finde none,
Into that gardin for to gone,
Ne nought wist I if that there were
Either hole or place where,
By which I might have entre,
Ne there was none to teache me,
For I was all alone ywis,
For woe and anguishe of this,
Till at last bethought I me,
That by no way ne might it be,
That there nas ladder ne way to pace
Or hole, into so faire a place.

Tho gan I go a full great paas,
Environ, even in compas,
The closing of the square wall,
Till that I found a wicket small
So shette, that I ne might in gone,
And other entre was there none.
Upon this doore I gan to smite
That was so fetis, and so lite,
For other waye coud I not seke.
Full longe I shofe, and knocked eke,
And stode full long all herkening
If that I heard any wight comming:
Till that the doore of thilke entre
A maiden curteis opened me:
Her haire was as yellowe of hewe
As any bason scoured newe,
Her fleshe tender as is a chicke
With bente browes, smooth and slicke,
And by measure large were
The opening of her eyen clere:
Her nose of good proportion,
Her eyen graie, as is a faucon,
With sweete breath and well favoured,
Her face white and well coloured,
With little mouth, and round to see;
A clove chinne eke had she;
Her necke was of good fashion
In length and greatnesse by reason,
Without bleine, scabbe, or roine;
Fro Jerusalem unto Burgoine
Ther n'is a fairer necke ywis
To fele how smooth and soft it is.
Her throte also white of hewe,
As snowe on braunche snowed newe.
Of bodie full well wrought was she,
Men neden not in no countre
A fairer bodie for to seke:
And of fine orfrais had she eke
A chapelet, so semely on,
Ne wered never maide upon;
And faire above that chapelet
A rose garlonde had she set;
She had a gaie mirrour
And with a riche gold tressour,
Her head was tressed queintly
Her sleeves sewed fetously.
And for to keepe her hondes faire
Of gloves white she had a paire:
And she had on a coate of grene
Of cloth of Gaunt, withouten wene:
Well seemed by her apparaile
She was not wont to great travaile.
For whan shee kempt was fetously
And well araied and richly,
Than had she done all her iournee,
For merrye and well begon was she.
She led a lustie life in May,
She had no thought, by night ne day
Of nothing, but if it were onely.
To graithe her well and uncouthly.
Whan that this dore had opened me
This maiden, seemely for to see,
I thonked her as I best might,
And asked her how that she hight:
And what she was, I asked eke,
And she to me was nought unmeke
Ne of her answere daungerous,
But faire answerde, and sayed thus:
"Lo sir, my name is Idlenesse
So elepe men me, more and lesse:
Full mightie and full rich am I,
And that of one thinge namely,
For I entende to nothing
But to my joye, and my pleying,
And for to kembe and tresse me:
Acquainted am I and prive
With Mirthe, lord of this gardine,
That fro the londe of Alexandrine
Made the trees hither be fet,
That in this gardin been yset:
And when the trees woxen on hight,
This wall that stant here in thy sight,
Did Mirthe enclosen all about,
And these images all without
He did hem both entayle and paint,
That neither been jolife ne queint,
But they been full of sorowe and wo,
As thou hast seene a while ago.

"And oft time him to solace
Sir Mirthe commeth into this place,
And eke with him commeth his meinie,
That liven in lust and jolitie:
And now is Mirthe therein, to here
The birdes how they singen clere,
The mavis and the nightingale,
And other jolly birdes smale:
And thus he walketh to solace
Him and his folke, for sweeter place
To playen in, he may not finde,
Although he sought one in tyl Inde.
The alther fairest folke to see
That in this worlde may found bee
Hath Mirthe with him in his rout,
That followen him alwaies about."
When Idlenesse had told all this,
And I had herkened well ywis,
Then saied I to dame Idlenesse,
"Now also wisely God me blesse,
Sith Mirthe, that is so faire and fre,
Is in this yerd with his meinie,
Fro thilke assemble, if I may,
Shall no man werne me to day,
That I this night ne mote it see,
For well wene I there with him bee
A faire and jolie companie
Fulfilled of all courtesie:"
And forth with out wordes mo
In at the wicket went I tho,
That Idlenesse had opened mee,
Into that garden faire to see.
And whan I was in ywis,
Mine herte was full glad of this.
For well wened I full sikerly
Have been in Paradice earthly,
So faire it was, that trusteth well,
It seemed a place espirituell.
For certes at my devise,
There is no place in Paradice,
So good in for to dwell or be,
As in that garden thoughte me.
For there was many a bird singing,
Throughout the yerde all thringing,
In many places were nightingales,
Alpes, finches, and wodwales,
That in hir swete song delighten
In thilke places as they habiten.
There mighte men see many flockes
Of turtles and laverockes,
Chelaundres fele saw I there,

That very nigh forsongen were.
And thrustles, terins, and mavise,
That songen for to win hem prise,
And eke to surmount in hir song
That other birdes hem emong
By note made faire servise :
These birdes, that I you devise,
They song her song as faire and well,
As angels doon espirituell,
And trusteth me, when I hem herde,
Full lustie and well I ferde :
For never yet such melodie
Was heard of man that mighte die.
Such swete song was hem emong,
That me thought it no birdes song,
But it was wonder like to bee
Song of meremaidens of the see,
That for hir singen is so clere :
Though we meremaidens clepe hem here
In English, as is our usaunce,
Men clepe hem sereins in Fraunce.

Ententive weren for to sing
These birdes, that not unkonning
Were of hir craft, and à prentise,
But of songe subtill and wise :
And certes, whan I heard hir song,
And sawe the grene place among,
In heart I wext so wonder gay,
That I was never, ere that day,
So jolife, nor so well bigo,
Ne merry in heart, as I was tho :
And than wist I, and saw full well,
That Idlenesse me served well,
That me put in such jolite,
Her frend well ought I for to be,
Sith she the dore of that gardin
Had opened, and me let in.
From henceforth, how that I wrought
I shall you tell,—as me thought :
First whereof Mirthe served there,
And eke what folke there with him were,
Without fable I woll discrive,
And that garden eke as blive ;
I woll you tellen after this
The faire fashion all ywis,
That well wrought was for the nones ;
I may not tell you all atones,
But as I may and can, I shall
By order tellen you it all.
Full faire service, and eke full swete
These birdes maden as they sete :
Laies of love, ful well souning
They songen in hir jargoning,
Some high, and some eke lowe songe
Upon the braunches greene yspronge :
The sweetnesse of hir melodie
Made all mine heart in revelrie,
And whan that I heard I trowe
These birdes singing on a rowe,
Then might I not withholde mee
That I ne went in for to see
Sir Mirthe, for my desiring
Was him to seene over all thing,
His countenaunce and his manere ;
That sighte was to me full dere.

Tho went I forth on my right hond
Downe by a litel path I fond
Of mintes full, and fennell greene,
As faste by withouten wene
Sir Mirthe I found, and right anone
Unto sir Mirthe gan I gone,
There as he was him to solace,
And with him in that lustie place,
So faire folke and so fresh had he,
That when I saw, I wondred me
Fro whence suche folke might come,
So faire they weren all and some :
For they weren like, as to my sight,
To angels, that ben fethered bright.
These folke, of which I tell you so,
Upon a karole wenten tho :
A ladie karoled hem, that hight
Gladnesse, blissfull, and light,
Well could she sing and lustely
None halfe so well and seemely :
And couthe make in song such refraining.
It sate her wonder well to sing.
Her voice full clere was and full swete.
She was not rude ne unmete,
But couthe ynough for such doing
As longeth unto karolling :
For she was wont in every place
To singen first, folke to solace,
For singing most she gave her to,
No craft had she so lefe to do.

Tho mightest thou karoles seene,
And folke daunce and merry beene,
And made many a faire tournyng
Upon the greene grasse springing.
There mightest thou see these flutours,
Minstrales, and eke jogelours,
That well to singe did hir paine :
Some song songes of Loraine,
For in Loraine hir notes be
Full sweeter than in this countre.
There was many a timbestere,
And sailours, that I dare well swere
Couthe hir craft full perfitly :
The timbres up full subtelly
They cast, and hent full oft
Upon a finger faire and soft,
That they failed never mo.
Full fetis damoseles two,
Right yong, and full of semelyhede
In kirtles, and none other wede,
And faire tressed every tresse
Had Mirthe doen for his noblesse
Amid the carole for to daunce,
But hereof lieth no remembraunce,
How that they daunced queintly :
That one would come all prively
Ayen that other, and when they were
Togither almost, they threw yfere
Hir mouthes so, that through hir play
It seemed as they kist alway :
To dauncen well couthe they the gise.
What should I more to you devise ?
Ne bode I never thence go,
Whiles that I saw hem daunce so.
Upon the caroll wonder fast,
I gan beholde, till at last
A ladie gan me for to espie,
And she was cleped Courtesie,
The worshipfull, the debonaire,
I pray to God ever fall her faire :
Full courtesly she called me,
" What doe ye there, beau sire ?" (quod she)

"Come, and if it like you
To dauncen, daunceth with us now:"
And I without tarrying
Went into the carolling,
I was abashed never a dele,
But it to me liked right wele,
That Courtesie me cleped so,
And bade me on the daunce go.
For if I had durst, certaine
I would have carolled right faine
As man that was to daunce right blithe:
Than gan I looken oft sithe
The shape, the bodies, and the cheres,
The countenaunce and the maneres
Of all the folke that daunced there,
And I shall tellen what they were.
Full faire was MIRTHE, full long and high,
A fairer man I never sigh:
As round as apple was his face,
Full roddie and white in every place:
Fetis he was and well besey,
With meetly mouth and eyen gray,
His nose by measure wrought full right,
Crispe was his haire, and eke full bright:
His shoulderes of a large brede,
And smallish in the girdlestede:
He seemed like a purtreiture,
So noble he was of his stature,
So faire, so jolly, and so fetise,
With limmes wrought at point devise
Deliver, smert, and of great might:
Ne saw thou never man so light.
Of berd unneth had he nothing,
For it was in the firste spring,
Full yong he was, and merry of thought
And in samette, with birdes wrought,
And with gold beaten full fetously,
His bodie was clad full richely:
Wrought was his robe in straunge gise,
And all to slittered for queintise
In many a place, low and hie,
And shode he was with great maistrie,
With shoone decoped, and with lace,
By druerie, and by solace,
His lefe a rosen chapelet
Had made, and on his head it set.
And wete ye who was his lefe,
Dame GLADNESSE there was him so lefe,
That singeth so well with glad courage,
That from she was twelve yeare of age,
She of her love graunt him made:
Sir Mirthe her by the finger hade
Dauncing, and she him also,
Great love was atwixt hem two:
Both were they faire and bright of hew,
She semed like a rose new
Of colours, and her flesh so tender,
That with a brere small and tender,
Men might it cleve, I dare well say:
Her forhead frounceles all play,
Bent were her browes two,
Her eyen gray, and glad also,
That laughden aye in her semblaunt,
First or the mouth by covenaunt.
I wot not what of her nose I shall discrive,
So faire hath no woman alive:
Her haire was yellow, and clere shining,
I wote no lady so liking.
Of orfraies fresh was her garland,
I whiche seene have a thousand
Saw never ywis no garland yet,
So well wrought of silke as it.
And in an over gilt samite
Clad she was, by great delite,
Of whiche her lefe a robe werde,
The merrier she in her heart ferde.
And next her went, on her other side,
THE GOD OF LOVE, that can divide
Love, and as him liketh it be,
But he can chorles daunten, he,
And many folkes pride fallen,
And he can well these lordes thrallen,
And ladies put at low degree
When he may hem too proude see.
This god of love of his fashion
Was like no knave, ne quistron:
His beautie greatly was to prise,
But of his robe to devise
I dreade encombred for to be,
For not yclad in silke was he,
But all in floures and flourettes,
I painted all with amorettes,
And with losenges and scochons,
With birdes, liberdes, and lions,
And other beastes wrought full wele;
His garment was every dele
Ipurtraied and ywrought with flours,
By divers medeling of colours:
Floures ther were of many gise
Yset by compasse in a sise,
There lacked no floure to my dome,
Ne not so much as floure of brome,
Ne violet, ne eke pervinke,
Ne floure none, that men can on thinke:
And many a rose lefe full long
Was entermedled there emong:
And also on his head was set
Of roses redde a chapelet.
But nightingales a full great rout
That flien over his head about,
The leaves felden as they flien,
And he was all with birdes wrien,
With popinjay, with nightingale,
With chelaundre, and with wodewale,
With finch, with larke, and with archangell,
He seemed as he were an angell,
That down were comen fro Heaven clere.
Love had with him a bachelere,
That he made alwayes with him be,
SWETE LOOKING cleped was he:
This batcheler stode beholding
The daunce, and in his honde holding
Turke bowes too, full well devised had hee,
That one of hem was of a tree
That beareth a fruict of savour wicke,
Full crooked was that foule sticke,
And knottie here and there also,
And blacke as berrie, or any slo.
That other bow was of a plant
Without wemme, I dare warrant,
Full even and by proportion,
Trectes and long, of full good fashion,
And it was painted well and thwitten,
And over all diapred and written
With ladies and with bacheleres,
Full lightsome and glad of cheres:
These bowes two held Sweet Looking,
That seemed like no gadling:
And ten brode arrowes held he there,
Of which five in his honde were,

But they were shaven well and dight,
Nocked and feathered aright:
And all they were with golde begon,
And stronge pointed everichon,
And sharpe for to kerven wele,
But yron was there none ne stele:
For all was golde, men might see,
Out-take the feathers and the tree.

The swiftest of these arrowes five
Out of a bowe for to drive,
And beste feathered for to flie,
And fairest eke, was cleped Beautie:
That other arrow that hurteth lesse,
Was cleped (as I trow) Simplesse:
The thirde cleped was Fraunchise,
That feathered was in noble wise
With valour and with courtesie:
The fourth was clepen Companie,
That heavie for to shooten is,
But who so shooteth right ywis,
May therewith doen great harme and wo:
The fift of these, and last also,
Faire Semblaunt men that arrow call,
The leste greevous of hem all,
Yet can it make a full great wound,
But he may hope his sores sound
That hurt is with that arrowe ywis,
His wo the bette bestowed is:
For he may sooner have gladnesse,
His langour ought to be the lesse.

Five arrowes were of other gise,
That been full foule to devise:
For shaft and end, sooth for to tell,
Were al so blacke as fiend in Hell.
The first of hem is called Pride,
That other arrow next him beside,
It was cleped Villanie,
That arrow was with fellonie
Envenimed, and with spitous blame:
The third of hem was cleped Shame.
The fourth, Wanhope cleped is,
The fift, the Newe Thought ywis.
These arrowes that I speake of here,
Were all five on one mannere,
And all were they resemblable;
To hem was well fitting and able,
The foule crooked bowe hidous,
That knottie was, and all roinous;
That bowe seemed well to shete
The arrowes five, that been unmete
And contrary to that other five:
But though I tell not as blive
Of hir power, ne of hir might,
Hereafter shall I tellen right
The sooth, and eke signifiaunce,
As ferre as I have remembraunce:
All shall be saied I undertake,
Ere of this booke an end I make.
Now come I to my tale againe:
But alderfirst, I woll you saine
The fashion and the countenaunces
Of all the folke that on the daunce is.
The god of love jolife and light,
Led on his honde a ladie bright,
Of high prise, and of great degre,
This ladie called was Beaute,
And an arrow, of which I told,
Full well thewed was she hold:
Ne she was derke ne browne, but bright,
And cleare as the moone light:
Againe whom all the starres semen
But small candles, as we demen:
Her flesh was tender as dewe of floure,
Her cheare was simple as bird in boure,
As white as lilly or rose in rise:
Her face gentill and tretise:
Fetis she was, and small to see,
No wintred browes had shee,
Ne popped haire, for it needed nought
To winder her, or to paint her ought:
Her tresses yellow, and long straughten,
Unto her heeles downe they raughten:
Her nose, her mouth, and eye and cheke
Well wrought, and all the remnaunt eke.
A full gret savour and a swote;
Me thoughte in mine herte rote,
As helpe me God, when I remember,
Of the fashion of every member,
In world is none so faire a wight:
For yong she was, and hewed bright
Sore pleasant, and fetis with all,
Gent, and in her middle small.
Beside Beaute yede Richesse,
An high ladie of great noblesse,
And great of price in every place:
But who so durst to her trespace
Or till her folke, in werke or dede,
He were full hardie out of drede:
For both she helpe and hinder may,
And that is not of yesterday
That riche folke have full great might
To helpe, and eke to greve a wight.
The best and greatest of valour
Didden Richesse full great honour,
And busie weren her to serve,
For that they would her love deserve;
They cleped her ladie, gret and small,
This wide world her dredeth all:
This world is all in her daungere,
Her court hath many a losengere,
And many a traitour envious,
That ben full busie and curious
For to dispraise, and to blame
That best deserven love and name,
To forne the folke hem to begilen,
These losengeours hem preise and smilen.
And thus the world with word annointen,
But afterward they prill and pointen
The folke, right to the bare bone,
Behinde hir backe when they ben gone,
And foule abaten folkes prise.
Full many a worthy man and wise
Han hindred, and ydon to die
These losengeours with hir flatterie,
And maketh folke full straunge be,
There as hem ought ben prive:
Well evill mote they thrive and thee,
And evill arived mote they bee
These losengeours full of envie.
No good man loveth hir companie.
Richesse a robe of purple on had,
Ne trow not that I lie or mad:
For in this world is none it liche,
Ne by a thousand deale so riche,
Ne none so faire, for it full wele,
With orfreis laied was every dele,
And purtraid in the ribanings
Of dukes stories, and of kings,

And with a bend of gold tassiled,
And knopes fine of gold amiled :
About her necke of gentle entayle
Was shet the riche chevesaile,
In which there was full great plente
Of stones clere, and faire to se.
Richesse a girdle had upon,
The bokell of it was of ston,
Of vertue great, and mokell of might :
For who so bare the stone so bright,
Of venim durst him nothing doubt
While he the stone had him about :
That stone was greatly for to love,
And till a riche mannes behove
Worth all the gold in Rome and Frise :
The mourdant wrought in noble gise
Was of a stone full precious,
That was so fine and vertuous,
That whole a man it couth make
Of palsie, and of tothe ake,
And yet the stone had such a grace,
That he was seker in every place
All thilke day not blind to beene,
That fasting might that stone seene :
The barres were of gold full fine,
Upon a tissue of sattine
Full heavie, great, and nothing light,
In everiche was a besaunt wight.
Upon the tresses of richesse
Was set a circle of noblesse
Of brende golde, that full light shone,
So faire trow I was never none :
But he were cunning for the nones,
That could devise all the stones
That in that circle shewen clere,
It is a wonder thing to here :
For no man could preise or gesse
Of hem the value or richesse :
Rubies there were, saphirs, ragounces,
And emeraudes, more than two unces.
But all before full subtilly
A fine carbuncle set saw I,
The stone so cleare was and so bright,
That all so soone as it was night,
Menne might seene to go for nede
A mile or two, in length and brede.
Such light ysprang out of the stone,
That Richesse wonder bright yshone
Bothe her hedde, and all her face,
And eke about her all the place.
Dame Richesse on her hond gan lede
A yong man full of semelyhede,
That she best loved of any thing,
His lust was much in housholding :
In clothing was he full fetise,
And loved well to have hors of prise,
He wend to have reproved be
Of theft or murder, if that he
Had in his stable an hacknay,
And therefore he desired aye
To been acquainted with Richesse,
For all his purpose, as I gesse,
Was for to maken great dispence,
Withouten warning or defence :
And Richesse might it well sustaine,
And her dispences wele maintaine,
And him alway such plentie send
Of gold and silver for to spend
Withouten lacking or daungere,
As it were pourde in a garnere.

And after on the daunce went
Largesse, that set all her entent
For to ben honorable and free,
Of Alexanders kinne was shee :
Her moste joie was ywis,
When that she yafe, and saied, have this.
Not Avarice the foule caitife
Was halfe to gripe so ententife
As Largesse is, to yeve and spend,
And God alway ynowe her send,
So that the more she yave away,
The more ywis she had alway.
Great loos hath Largesse, and great prise,
For both wise folke and unwise
Were wholly to her bandon brought,
So well with yeftes hath she wrought.
And if she had an enemy,
I trowe that she couth craftely
Make him full soone her friend to be,
So large of yeftes, and wise was she,
Therefore she stood in love and grace
Of rich and poore in every place.
A full great foole he is ywis,
That both rich and poore, and niggard is.
A lord may have no manner vice,
That greeveth more than avarice.
For niggard never with strength of hand
May win him great lordship or land :
For friendes all too few hath he
To doen his will performed be :
And who so woll have friendes here,
He may not hold his treasure dere.
For by ensample tell I this,
Right as an adamant ywis
Can drawen to him subtelly
The yron that is laied thereby,
So draweth folkes hearts ywis
Silver and gold that yeven is.
Largesse had on a robe fresh
Of riche purpure sarlinish :
Well formed was her face and clere,
And opened had she her colere,
For she right there had in present
Unto a lady made present
Of a gold broche, full well wrought,
And certes it mis-sate her nought :
For through her smocke wrought with silke,
The flesh was seene as white as milke :
Largesse, that worthy was and wise,
Held by the hond a knight of prise,
Was sibbe to Arthour of Breteigne,
And that was he that bare the enseigne
Of worship, and the gosfaucoun :
And yet he is of such renoun,
That menne of him say faire things
Before barons, earles, and kings.
This knight was commen all newly
Fro tourneying faste by,
There had he done great chivalrie
Through his vertue and his maistrie,
And for the love of his lemman
He cast downe many a doughty man.
And next him daunced dame Fraunchise,
Arrayed in full noble gise :
She nas not broune ne dunne of hew,
But white as snow yfallen new :
Her nose was wrought at point devise,
For it was gentill and tretise,
With eyen glad, and browes bent,
Her haire downe to her heles went,

And she was simple as dove on tree,
Full debonaire of hert was shee.
  She durste neither say ne do,
But that, that her longeth to:
And if a man were in distresse,
And for her love in heavinesse,
Her herte would have full great pitee
She was so amiable and free:
For were a manne for her bestad,
She woulde ben right sore adrad,
That she did overgreat outrage,
But she him hope his harme t'aswage,
Her thought it all a villany,
And she had on a suckeny,
That not of hempe herdes was,
So faire was none in all Arras,
Lord, it was riddled fetisly,
There nas not a point truely
That it nas in his right assise,
Full well yclothed was Fraunchise,
For there n'is no cloth sitteth bette
On damosell, than doth rokette:
A woman well more fetise is
In rokette, than in cote ywis,
The white rokette riddeled faire,
Betokeneth, that full debonaire
And swete was she that it bere.
  By her daunced a bachelere,
I cannot tellen what he hight,
But faire he was, and of good height,
All had he ben, I say no more,
The lordes sonne of Windesore.
  And next that daunced COURTESIE,
That preised was of low and hie,
For neither proud ne foole was she:
She for to daunce called me,
I praie God give her good grace,
For when I came first into the place,
She nas not nice, ne outrageous,
But wise and ware, and vertuous,
Of faire speech, and faire answer,
Was never wight missaid of her:
She bare no rancour to no wight,
Clere browne she was, and therto bright
Of face and body avenaunt
I wote no lady so pleasaunt,
She weren worthy for to bene
An emperesse or crowned quene.
  And by her went a knight dauncing
That worthy was and well speaking,
And full well coud he done honour:
The knight was faire and stiffe in stour,
And in armure a seemely man,
And well beloved of his lemman.
  Faire Idlenesse then saw I,
That alway was me faste by,
Of her have I withouten faile
Told you the shape and apparaile:
For (as I said) Lo, that was she
That did to me so great bounte.
She the gate of that gardin
Undid, and let me passen in,
And after daunced as I gesse.
  And she fulfilled of lustinesse,
That n'as not yet twelve yeare of age,
With herte wild, and thought volage.
Nice she was, but she ne ment
None harme ne sleight in her entent,
But onely lust and jolite.
For yonge folke, well weten ye,
Have little thought but on hir play.
Her lemman was beside alway,
In such a gise, that he her kist
At all times that him list,
That all the daunce might it see,
They make no force of privetee:
For who so spake of hem evill or wele,
They were ashamed never adele,
But men might seene hem kisse there,
As it two yonge doves were,
For yonge was thilke bachelere,
Of beauty wot I non his pere,
And he was right of such an age,
As youth his lefe, and such courage.
  The lusty folke that daunced there,
And also other that with hem were
That weren all of hir meinee
Full hende folke, wise, and free,
And folke of faire port truly,
There were all comenly.
  Whan I had seene the countenaunces
Of hem that ladden thus these daunces,
Than had I will to go and see
The garden that so liked mee,
And loken on these faire laureres,
On pine trees, cedres, and ormeres,
The daunces than al ended were,
For many of hem that daunced there,
Were with her loves went away
Under the trees to have her play.

A LORD, they lived lustely,
A great foole were he sikerly,
That n'old his thankes such life lede:
For this dare I saine out of drede,
That who so mighte so well fare,
For better life durst him not care,
For there n'is so good paradise,
As to have a love at his devise:
Out of that place went I tho,
And in that garden gan I go,
Playing along full merely.
The god of love full hastely
Unto him SWEET-LOOKING clept,
No lenger would he that she kept
His bowe of gold, that shone so bright.
He had him bent anon right,
And he full soone set an end,
And at a braide he gan it bend,
And tooke him of his arrowes five,
Full sharpe and ready for to drive.
  Now God that sitteth in majeste
Fro deadly woundes he keepe me,
If so be that he had me shete,
For if I with his arrow mete,
It had me greeved sore ywis,
But I, that nothing wist of this,
Went up and downe full many a way,
And he me followed fast alway,
But no where would I reste me,
Till I had in all the garden be.

THE garden was by measuring
Right even and square in compassing,
It as long was as it was large,
Of fruit had every tree his charge,
But it were any hidous tree
Of whiche there were two or three.
  There were, and that wote I full wele,
Of pomgranettes a full great dele,

That is a fruit full well to like,
Namely to folke when they ben sike:
And trees there were great foison,
That baren nuts in hir season,
Such as menne nutmegges call,
That swote of savour been withall,
And almandres great plentee,
Figges, and many a date tree
There weren, if menne had nede,
Through the gardin in length and brede.
There was eke wexing many a spice,
As clowe, gilofre, and licorice,
Gingere, and grein de Paris,
Canell, and setewale of pris,
And many a spice delitable,
To eaten when men rise fro table.
And many homely trees there were,
That peaches, coines, and apples bere,
Medlers, plummes, peeres, chesteinis,
Cherise, of whiche many one faine is,
Notes, aleis, and bolas,
That for to seene it was solas,
With many high laurer and pine,
Was renged clene all that gardine,
With cipres, and with oliveris,
Of which that nigh no plenty here is.
There were elmes great and strong,
Maples, ashe, oke, aspes, planes long,
Fine ewe, popler, and lindes faire,
And other trees full many a paire.
What should I tell you more of it?
There were so many trees yet,
That I should all encombred bee,
Ere I had reckoned every tree.
These trees were set that I devise,
One from another in assise
Five fadome or sixe, I trowe so,
But they were high and great also:
And for to keepe out well the Sunne,
The croppes were so thicke yrunne,
And every braunch in other knitte,
And full of greene leaves sitte,
That Sunne might there none descend,
Least the tender grasses shend.
There might menne does and roes ysee,
And of squirrels full great plentee,
From bough to bough alway leping,
Connies there were also playing,
That comen out of hir clapers
Of sundry colours and maners,
And maden many a tourneying
Upon the freshe grasse springing.
In places saw I welles there,
In whiche there no frogges were,
And faire in shaddow was every well;
But I ne can the number tell
Of stremis small, that by devise
Mirthe had done come through condise,
Of which the water in renning
Gan make a noise full liking.
About the brinkes of these wels,
And by the streames over all els
Sprang up the grasse, as thicke yset
And softe as any velvet.
On which men might his lemman ley,
As on a featherbed to ley,
For the earth was full soft and swete:
Through moisture of the well wete
Sprong up the sote grene gras,
As faire, as thicke, as mister was.
But much amended it the place,
That thearth was of such a grace
That it of floures hath plente,
That both in summer and winter be.
There sprang the violet all new,
And freshe pervinke rich of hew,
And floures yellow, white, and rede,
Such plenty grew there never in mede:
Full gay was all the ground and queint,
And poudred, as men had it peint,
With many a fresh and sundry flour,
That casten up full good savour.
I woll nat long hold you in fable
Of all this garden delectable,
I mote my tongue stinten nede,
For I ne may withouten drede
Naught tellen you the beautie all,
Ne halfe the bountie therewithall.
I went on right honde and on left
About the place, it was not left
Till I had all the garden beene
In the esters that men might seene.
And thus while I went in my playe,
The god of love me followed aye.
Right as an hunter can abide
The beast, till he seeth his tide
To shooten at goodnesse to the deere,
Whan that him needeth go no neere.
And so befell, I rested mee
Besides a well under a tree,
Which tree in Fraunce men call a pine,
But sith the time of king Pepine
Ne grew there tree in mannes sight
So faire, ne so well woxe in hight,
In all that yard so high was none.
And springing in a marble stone
Had nature set, the sooth to tell,
Under that pine tree a well,
And on the border all without
Was written on the stone about
Letters small, that saiden thus,
Here starfe the faire Narcissus.
Narcissus was a bachelere,
That Love had caught in his daungere,
And in his nette gan him so straine,
And did him so to weepe and plaine,
That need him must his life forgo:
For a faire lady, that hight Echo,
Him loved over any creature,
And gan for him such paine endure,
That on a time she him tolde,
That if he her loven nolde,
That her behoved needes die,
There lay none other remedie.
But nathelesse, for his beaute
So fierce and daungerous was he,
That he nolde graunten her asking,
For weeping, ne for faire praying.
And when she heard him werne her so,
She had in herte so grete wo,
And tooke it in so grete despite,
That she without more respite
Was dead anon: but ere she deide,
Ful pitously to God she preide,
That proude hearted Narcissus,
That was in love so daungerous,
Might on a day ben hampered so
For love, that ben so hote for wo,
That never he might to joy attaine;
Then should he fele in very vaine

What sorrow true lovers maken,
That ben so villainously forsaken.

THIS prayer was but reasonable,
Therefore God held it firme and stable:
For Narcissus shortly to tell,
By aventure came to that well
To rest him in the shaddowing
A day, when he came from hunting.
This Narcissus had suffred paines
For renning all day in the plaines,
And was for thurst in great distresse
Of herte, and of his wearinesse,
That had his breath almost benomen.
Whan he was to that well ycomen,
That shaddowed was with braunches grene,
He thought of thilke water shene
To drinke and fresh him wele withall,
And downe on knees he gan to fall,
And forth his necke and head outstraught
To drinke of that well a draught:
And in the water anon was sene
His nose, his mouth, his eyen shene,
And he thereof was all abashed,
His owne shaddow had him betrashed,
For well wend he the forme see
Of a childe of great beautee,
Well couth Love him wreke tho
Of daungere and of pride also
That Narcissus sometime him bere,
He quite him well his guerdon there,
For he mused so in the well,
That shortely the sooth to tell,
He loved his owne shaddow so,
That at last he starfe for wo:
For when he saw that he his will
Might in no manner way fulfill,
And that he was so faste caught
That he him couthe comfort naught,
He lost his wit right in that place
And died within a little space,
And thus his warison he tooke
For the lady that he forsoke.
Ladies I praye ensample taketh,
Ye that ayenst your love mistaketh:
For if of hir death be you to wite,
God can full well your wile quite.
When that this letter of which I tell,
Had taught me that it was the well
Of Narcissus in his beaute,
I gan anon withdrawe me,
When it fell in my remembraunce,
That him betide such mischaunce:
But at the laste than thought I,
That scatheless, full sikerly,
I might unto the welle go,
Whereof shull I abashen so.
Unto the welle then went I mee,
And downe I louted for to see
The clere water in the stone,
And eke the gravell, which that shone
Downe in the bottome, as silver fine:
For of the well, this is the fine,
In world is none so clere of hew,
The water is ever fresh and new
That welmeth up with waves bright
The mountenaunce of two finger hight:
About it is grasse springing,
For moist so thicke and well liking,
That it ne may in winter die,
No more than may the see be drie.

DOWNE at the bottome set saw I
Two christal stones craftely
In thilke fresh and faire well:
But o thing soothly dare I tell,
That ye woll hold a great mervaile
Whan it is told withouten faile:
For whan the Sunne clere in sight
Cast in that well his beames bright,
And that the heat descended is,
Than taketh the christall stone ywis,
Againe the Sunne an hundred hewis,
Blew, yellow, and red, that fresh and new is:
Yet hath the mervailous christall
Such strength, that the place over all,
Both foule and tree, and leaves greene,
And all the yerd in it is seene:
And for to done you to understond,
To make ensample woll I fond:
Right as a mirrour openly
Sheweth all thing that stondeth thereby,
As well the colour as the figure,
Withouten any coverture:
Right so the christall stone shining,
Withouten any deceiving,
The entrees of the yerd accuseth
To him that in the water museth:
For ever in which halfe ye bee,
Ye may well halfe the garden see:
And if he turne, he may right wele
Seene the remenaunt every dele:
For there is none so little thing
So hid ne closed with shytting,
That it ne is seene, as though it were
Painted in the chrystall there.
This is the mirrour perillus,
In which the proude Narcissus
Sey all his faire face bright,
That made him sith to lie upright:
For who so looke in that mirrour,
There may nothing ben his succour
That he ne shall there see something
That shall him lede into laughing:
Full many a worthy man hath it
Yblent, for folke of greatest wit
Ben soone caught here and waited,
Withouten respite ben they baited:
Here commeth to folke of new rage,
Here chaungeth many wight courage,
Here lithe no rede ne wit thereto,
For Venus sonne, dan Cupido,
Hath sowen there of love the sede,
That helpe ne lithe there none, ne rede,
So cercleth it the well about:
His ginnes hath he set without
Right for to catch in his panters
These damosels and bachelers.
Love will none other birde catch,
Though he set either nette or latch:
And for the seed that here was sowen,
This well is cleped, as well is knowen,
The Well of Love, of very right,
Of which there hath full many wight
Spoken in bookes diversly:
But they shull never so verily
Description of the well here,
Ne eke the sooth of this matere,

As ye shull, when I have undo
The craft that her belongeth to.

Alway me liked for to dwell,
To seene the christall in the well,
That shewed me full openly
A thousand thinges faste by,
But I may say in sorry houre
Stode I to looken or to poure:
For sithen I sore siked,
That mirrour hath me now entriked:
But had I first knowen in my wit
The vertue and strengthes of it,
I n'old not have mused there,
Me had bette ben eleswhere,
For in the snare I fell anone,
That had bitreshed many one.
In thilke mirrour saw I tho,
Among a thousand things mo,
A roser charged full of rosis,
That with an hedge about enclosis,
Tho had I suche luste and envie,
That for Paris ne for Pavie,
N'old I have left to gone and see,
There greatest heape of roses bee.
Whan I was with that rage hent,
That caught hath many a man and shent,
Toward the roser gan I go,
And whan I was not ferre therefro,
The savour of the roses swote
Me smote right to the heart rote,
As I had all enbaumed be:
And if I ne had endouted me
To have ben hated or assailed,
My thankes woll I not have failed
To pull a rose of all that rout
To beare in mine honde about,
And smellen to it where I went,
But ever I drede me to repent,
And least it greved or forthought
The lord that thilke gardin wrought.
Of roses there were great wone,
So faire were never in Rone:
Of knoppes close, some saw I there,
And some well better woxen were,
And some there been of other moison,
That drowe nigh to hir season,
And sped hem faste for to spred,
I love well such roses red:
For brode roses, and open also,
Ben passed in a day or two,
But knoppes will fresh bee
Two dayes at least, or els three.
The knoppes greatly liked mee,
For fairer may there no man see:
Who so might have one of all,
It ought him been full lefe withall:
Might I garlonde of hem getten,
For no richesse I would it letten.
Amongs the knoppes I chese one
So faire, that of the remnaunt none
Ne preise I halfe so well as it,
Whan I avise in my wit,
For it so well was enlumined
With colour red, as well fined
As nature couth it make faire,
And it hath leaves well foure paire,
That Kinde hath set through his knowing
About the red roses springing,
The stalke was as rishe right,
And thereon stood the knoppe upright,
That it ne bowed upon no side,
The swote smell sprung so wide,
That it died all the place about.
Whan I had smelled the savour swote,
No will had I fro thence yet go,
But somedele nere it went I tho
To take it, but mine hond for drede
Ne durst I to the rose bede,
For thistles sharpe of many manners,
Nettles, thornes, and hooked briers,
For muche they distourbled me,
For sore I drad to harmed be.

The god of love, with bowe bent,
That all day set had his talent
To pursue and to spien mee,
Was stonding by a figge tree,
And when he sawe how that I
Had chosen so ententifely
The bothum more unto my pey,
Than any other that I sey:
He tooke an arrow full sharpely whet,
And in his bowe when it was set,
He streight up to his eare drough
The strong bowe, that was so tough,
And shot at me so wonder smert,
That through mine eye unto mine hert
The takell smote, and deepe it went:
And therewithall such cold me hent,
That under clothes warme and soft,
Sithen that day I have chivered oft.
When I was hurte thus in stound,
I fell down plat unto the ground,
Mine herte failed and fainted aye,
And long time in swoune I lay:
But when I came out of swouning,
And had my wit, and my feeling,
I was all mate, and wend full wele
Of blood, have lorne a full great dele,
But certes the arrow that in me stood,
Of me ne drew no drop of blood,
For why I found my wounds all drey.
Than tooke I with mine hondes twey
The arrow, and full fast it out plight,
And in the pulling sore I sight,
So at the last the shaft of tree
I drough out, with the feathers three,
But yet the hooked head ywis,
The whiche Beauty called is,
Gan so deepe in mine herte pace,
That I it might not arace,
But in mine herte still it stood,
All bled I not a drop of blood:
I was both anguishous and trouble,
For the perill that I saw double,
I nist what to say or do,
Ne get a leach my wounds to,
For neither through grasse ne rote,
Ne had I helpe of hope ne bote.
But to the bothum evermo
Mine herte drew, for all my wo,
My thought was in none other thing,
For had it been in my keeping,
It would have brought my life againe,
For certes evenly, I dare well saine,
The sight only, and the savour,
Alegged much of my langour.

Than gan I for to drawe mee
Toward the bothum faire to see,
And Love had gette him in his throwe
Another arrowe into his bowe,
And for to shote gan him dresse,
The arrowes name was Simplesse,
And when that love gan nigh me nere,
He drowe it up withouten were,
And shot at me with all his might,
So that this arrow anon right
Throughout eigh as it was found,
Into mine herte hath made a wound.
Than I anon did all my craft
For to drawen out the shaft,
And therwithall I sighed eft,
But in mine herte the head was left,
Which aye increased my desire ;
Unto the bothum drow I nere,
And evermo that me was wo
The more desire had I to go
Unto the roser, where that grew
The fresh bothum so bright of hew,
Better me were to have letten be,
But it behoved nede me
To doen right as mine herte bad :
For ever the body must be lad
After the herte, in wele and wo,
Or force together they must go.
But never this archer would fine
To shote at me with all his pine,
And for to make me to him mete.
The third arrow he gan to shete,
Whan best his time he might espie,
The which was named Courtesie,
Into mine herte he did avale,
A swoune I fell, both dead and pale,
Long time I lay, and stirred nought,
Till I abraied out of my thought.
And faste than I avised mee
To drawe out the shaft of tree,
But ever the head was left behind
For ought I couthe pull or wind,
So sore it sticked when I was hit,
That by no craft I might it flit,
But anguishous and full of thought,
I felt such wo, my wound aye wrought,
That summoned me alway to go
Toward the rose, that pleased me so,
But I ne durst in no manere
Because the archer was so nere.
For evermore gladly as I rede,
Brent child of fire hath much drede.
And certes yet for all my pein,
Though that I sigh, yet arrowes rein,
And ground quarells sharpe of stele,
Ne for no paine that I might fele,
Yet might I not my selfe withhold
The faire roser to behold,
For Love me yave such hardement
For to fulfill his commaundement,
Upon my feet I rose up than
Feeble, as a forwounded man :
And forth to gone my might I set,
And for the archer nold I let,
Toward the roser fast I drowe
But thornes sharpe, mo than ynowe
There were, and also thistles thicke,
And breres brimme for to pricke,
That I ne might get grace
The rough thornes for to pace
To seene the roses fresh of hew,
I must abide, though it me rew,
The hedge about so thicke was,
That closed the roses in compas.
But o thing liked me right wele,
I was so nigh, I might fele
Of the bothum the swote odour,
And also see the fresh colour,
And that right greatly liked mee,
That I so nere might it see,
Such joy anon thereof had I,
That I forgat my malady,
To seene I had such delite,
Of sorrow and anger I was all quite,
And of my wounds that I had thore,
For nothing liken me might more,
Than dwellen by the roser aye,
And thence never to passe awaye :
But whan a while I had be thare,
The god of love, which all to share
Mine heart with his arrowes kene,
Casteth him to yeve me woundes grene,
He shot at me full hastely
An arrow named Company,
The whiche takell is full able
To make these ladies merciable,
Than I anone gan chaungen hew
For greevaunce of my wounde new,
That I againe fell in swouning,
And sighed sore in complaining.
Sore I complained that my sore
On me gan greven more and more,
I had none hope of allegiaunce,
So nigh I drow to disperaunce,
I rought of death, ne of life,
Whether that love would me drife,
If me a martir would he make,
I might his power not forsake :
And while for anger thus I woke,
The god of love an arrow toke,
Full sharpe it was and pugnaunt,
And it was called Faire Semblaunt,
The which in no wise would consent,
That any lover him repent
To serve his love with herte and all,
For any perill that may befall.
But though this arrow was clene ground,
As any rasour that is found,
To cut and kerve at the point,
The god of love it had annoint
With a precious oyntment,
Somedele to yeve allegement,
Upon the woundes that he hade
Through the body in my heart made,
To helpe hir sores, and to cure,
And that they may the bette endure :
But yet this arrow, without more,
Made in mine heart a large sore,
That in full greate paine I abode,
But aye the ointment went abrode
Throughout my woundes large and wide,
It sprede about in every side :
Through whose vertue and whose might,
Mine herte joyfull was and light.
I had ben dead and all to shent
But for the precious ointment :
The shaft I drow out of the arrow,
Roking for wo right wonder narrow,
But the head, which made me smart,
Left behinde in mine heart

With other fower, I dare well say,
That never woll be take away,
But the ointment halpe me wele,
And yet such sorrow did I fele,
That all day I chaunged hew,
Of my woundes fresh and new,
As men might see in my visage,
The arrowes were so full of rage,
So variaunt of diversitee,
That men in everiche might see
Both great annoy and eke sweetnesse,
And joy meint with bitternesse:
Now were they ensie, now were they wood,
In hem I felt both harme and good,
Now sore without alleggement,
Now softing with the ointement,
It softened here, and priked there,
Thus ease and anger together were.

The god of love deliverly
Come lepande to me hastely,
And saied to me in great jape,
"Yeeld thee, for thou may not escape,
May no defence availe thee here:
Therefore I rede make no daungere.
If thou wold yeeld thee hastely,
Thou shalt rather have mercy:
He is a foole in sikernesse,
That with daunger or stoutnesse
Rebelleth there that he should please,
In such folly is little ease.
Be meeke, where thou must needes bowe,
To strive ayen is not thy prowe:
Come at ones, and have ido,
For I woll that it be so,
Then yeeld thee here debonairly."
And I answered full humbly,
"Gladly sir, at your bidding,
I woll me yeeld in all thing:
To your service I woll me take,
For God defend that I should make
Ayen your bidding resistence.
I woll not doen so great offence,
For if I did, it were no skill,
Ye may do with me what ye will,
Save or spill, and also slo,
Fro you in no wise may I go,
My life, my death, is in your hond,
I may not last out of your bond,
Plaine at your list I yeeld me,
Hoping in heart, that sometime ye
Comfort and ese shull me send:
Or els shortly, this is the end,
Withouten health I mote aye dure,
But if ye take me to your cure:
Comfort or health, how should I have,
Sith ye me hurt, but ye me save?
The health of love mote be found,
Whereas they token first hir wound:
And if ye list of me to make
Your prisoner, I woll it take
Of heart and willfully at gree,
Holy and plaine I yeeld mee
Without feining or feintise,
To be governed by your emprise:
Of you I heare so much prise,
I woll been whole at your devise
For to fulfill your liking
And repent for nothing,
Hoping to have yet in some tide
Mercy, of that I abide:"
And with that covenaunt yeeld I mee,
Anon downe kneeling upon my knee,
Profering for to kisse his fete,
But for nothing he would me lete.
And said, "I love thee both and preise,
Sens that thine answere doth me ese:
For thou answered so curtesly,
For now I wote well utterly,
That thou art gentle by thy speech:
For though a man ferre would seech,
He shuld not finden in certaine,
No such answere of no villaine:
For such a worde ne might nought
Issue out of a villaines thought.
Thou shalt not lesen of thy speche,
For thy helping woll I eche,
And eke encreasen that I may:
But first I woll that thou obay
Fully for thine avauntage
Anone to doe me here homage:
And sithe kisse thou shalt my mouth,
Which to no villaine was never couth
For to approch it, ne for to touch,
For saufe of cherles I ne vouch
That they shall never neigh it nere;
For curteis, and of faire manere,
Well taught, and full of gentlenesse
He must be, that shall me kisse,
And also of full high fraunchise,
That shall attaine to that emprise.
"And first of o thing warne I thee,
That paine and great adversitee
He mote endure, and eke travaile
That shall me serve, without faile,
But there againe thee to comfort,
And with thy service to disport,
Thou maiest full glad and joyfull bee
So good a maister to have as mee,
And lord of so high renoune,
I beare of Love the gonfenoune,
Of curtesie the banere,
For I am of the selfe manere,
Gentle, courteous, meeke and free,
That who ever ententive bee
Me to honour, doute, and serve,
And also that he him observe
Fro trespasse and fro villanie,
And him governe in courtesie,
With will and entention;
For when he first in my prison
Is caught, then must he utterly,
Fro thenceforth full busily,
Cast him gentle for to be,
If he desire helpe of me."
Anon without more delay,
Withouten daunger or affray,
I become his man anone,
And gave him thankes many a one,
And kneled doune with hondes joint,
And made it in my port full queint:
The joy went to my herte rote,
Whan I had kissed his mouth so swote,
I had such mirth and such liking,
It cured me of languishing.
He asked of me than hostages,
"I have," he sayd, "taken fele homages
Of one and other, where I have bene,
Distreined oft, withouten wene,
These felons full of falsite,

Have many sithes beguiled me,
And through hir falshed hir lust atchieved,
Whereof I repent and am agreeved,
And I hem get in my daungere,
Hir falshed shall they bie full dere,
But for I love thee, I say thee plaine,
I woll of thee be more certaine,
For thee sore I woll now binde,
That thou away ne shalt not winde,
For to denien thy covenaunt,
Or done that is not avenaunt,
That thou were false, it were great ruth,
Sith thou seemest so ful of truth."
"Sir, if thee list to understand,
I marvaile thee asking this demaund,
For why or wherefore should ye,
Hostages or borowes aske of me,
Or any other sikernesse,
Sith ye wote in sothfastnesse,
That ye me have surprised so,
And hold mine heart, taken me fro,
That it woll doe for me nothing,
But if it be at your bidding,
Mine herte is yours, and mine right nought
As it behoveth, in deede and thought,
Ready in all to worke your will,
Whether so tourne to good or ill,
So sure it lusteth you to plese,
No man thereof may you disese,
Ye have thereon set such justise,
That it is werried in many wise,
And if ye doubt it n'old obaie,
Ye may thereof do make a kaie,
And hold it with you for hostage."
"Now certes this is none outrage,"
(Quoth Love) "and fully I accord,
For of the bodie he is full lord
That hath the heart in his treasore,
Outrage it were to asken more."

Than of his aumener he drough,
A little key fetise inough,
Which was of gold polished clere
And sayed to me, "With this keye here,
Thine herte to me now woll I shet,
For all my jowel loke and knet,
I binde under this little kay,
That no wight may carie away."
This key is full of great poste,
With which anone he touched me,
Under the side full softely,
That he mine herte sodainely,
Without annoy had speered,
That yet right nought it hath me deered.
When he had done his will all out,
And I had put him out of doubt,
"Sir" I sayd, "I have right great will,
Your lust and pleasure to fulfill,
Looke ye my service take at gree,
By thilke fayth ye owe to me,
I say nought for recreaundise,
For I nought doubt of your service.
"But the servaunt travaileth in vaine,
That for to serven doth his paine
Unto that lord, which in no wise,
Conne him no thanke for his service."

Love sayed, "Dismaie thee nought,
Sith thou for succour hast me sought,
In thanke thy service woll I take,
And high of degree woll thee make,
If wickednesse ne hinder thee,
But (as I hope) it shall nought bee,
To worship no wight by aventure,
May come, but he paine endure.
"Abide and suffer thy distresse,
That hurteth now, it shall be lesse.
I wote my selfe what may thee save,
What medicine thou wouldest have.
And if thy truth to me thou keepe,
I shall unto thine helping eke,
To cure thy woundes and make hem clene,
Where so they be old or grene,
Thou shalt be holpen at wordes few,
For certainly thou shalt well shew,
Where that thou servest with good will,
For to accomplishen and fulfill
My commaundements day and night,
Which I to lovers yeve of right."

"Ah sir, for Goddes love" (sayd I)
"Er ye passe hence ententifely,
Your commaundements to me say,
And I shall keepe hem if I may,
For hem to keepen is all my thought:
And if so be I wote hem nought,
Than may I unwittingly,
Wherefore I pray you entierly,
With all mine herte, me to lere,
That I trespace in no manere."
The god of love then charged me
Anon, as ye shall here and see,
Word by word, by right emprise,
So as the Romaunt shall devise.
The maister leseth his time to lere,
When the disciple woll not here,
It is but vaine on him to swinke,
That on his learning woll not thinke,
Who so lust love, let him entend,
For now the Romance beginneth to amend.
Now is good to heare in fay
If any be that can it say,
And point it as the reason is
Set for other gate ywis,
It shall nat well in all thing,
Be brought to good understanding,
For a reader that pointeth ill,
A good sentence may oft spill:
The booke is good at the ending,
Made of newe and lustie thing:
For who so woll the ending here,
The craft of love he shall now lere,
If that he woll so long abide,
Till I this Romaunce maie unhide,
And undoe the signifiaunce
Of this dreame into Romaunce,
The soothfastnesse that now is hid,
Without coverture shall be kid,
When I undoen have this dreaming,
Wherein no worde is of leasing.

"Villanie at the beginning,
I woll," sayd Love, "over all thing
Thou leave, if thou wolt ne be
False, and trespace ayenst me:
I curse and blame generally
All hem that loven villany,
For villanie maketh villeine
And by his deeds a chorle is seine.
"These villaines arne without pitie,
Friendship, love, and all bountie.
I nill receive unto my serviso

Hem that been villaines of emprise.
" But understond in thine entent,
That this is not mine entendement,
To clepe no wight in no ages
Onely gentle for his linages :
But who so is vertuous,
And in his port not outrageous,
When such one thou seest thee beforne,
Though he be not gentle borne,
Than maiest well seine this in sooth,
That he is gentle, because he doth
As longeth to a gentleman :
Of hem none other deme I can,
For certainly withouten dreede,
A chorle is demed by his deede,
Of hye or lowe, as ye may see,
Or of what kinred that he bee.
Ne say nought for none evill will,
Thing that is to holden still,
It is no worship to mis-saie,
Thou mayest ensample take of Kaie,
That was sometime for mis-sayeng,
Hated both of old and yeng :
As ferre as Gawein the worthie,
Was praysed for his courtesie,
Kaie was hated, for he was fell,
Of word dispitous and cruell ;
Wherefore be wise and acqueintable,
Goodly of word, and reasonable :
Both to lesse and eke to mare,
And when thou commest there men are,
Looke that thou have in custome ay,
First to salve hem if thou may :
And if it fall, that of hem somme
Salve the first, be not domme,
But quite him courtesly anone
Without abiding, ere they gone.
" For nothing eke thy tongue applie
To speake words of ribauldrie,
To villaine speech in no degree
Let never thy lippe unbounden bee :
For I nought hold him in good faith
Curteis, that foule wordes saith :
And all women serve and preise,
And to thy power hir honour reise :
And if that any mis-sayere
Despise women, that thou maist here,
Blame him, and bid him hold him still,
And set thy might and all thy will
Women and ladies for to please,
And to doe thing that may hem ease,
That they ever speake good of thee,
For so thou maiest best praised bee.
" Looke fro pride thou keepe thee wele,
For thou maiest both perceive and feele,
That pride is both folly and sin,
And he that pride hath him within,
Ne may his herte in no wise,
Meken ne souplen to service :
For pride is found in everie part,
Contrarie unto Loves art :
And he that loveth truely,
Should him conteine jollily,
Without pride in sundrie wise,
And him disguisen in queintise,
For queint array, without drede,
Is nothing proude, who taketh hede,
For fresh array, as men may see,
Without pride may ofte bee.
" Maintaine thy selfe after thy rent,
Of robe and eke of garment,
For many sithe faire clothing
A man amendeth in much thing.
" And looke alway that they be shape,
(What garment that thou shalt make)
Of him that can best do,
With all that partaineth thereto,
Pointes and sleeves be well sittand,
Right and streight on the hand,
Of shone and bootes, new and faire,
Looke at the least you have a paire,
And that they sit so fetously,
That these rude may utterly
Marvaile, sith that they sit so plaine,
How they come on or off againe.
Weare streighte gloves with aumere
Of silke : and alway with good chere
Thou yeve, if thou have richesse,
And if thou have nought, spend the lesse.
Alway be merry, if thou may,
But waste not thy good alway ;
Have hatte of floures fresh as May,
Chapelet of roses of Whitsunday,
For such arraie ne costneth but lite.
Thine hondes wash, thy teeth make white,
And let no filth upon thee bee,
Thy nayles blacke, if thou maiest see,
Voide it alwaie deliverly,
And kembe thine head right jollily :
Farce not thy visage in no wise,
For that of love is nat th'emprise,
For love doth haten, as I finde,
A beautie that commeth not of Kinde :
Alway in herte I read thee,
Glad and merry for to be,
And be as joyfull as thou can,
Love hath no joy of sorrowfull man,
That evill is full of curtesie,
That knoweth in his maladie,
For ever of love the sickenesse
Is meint with sweete and bitternesse :
The sore of love is marvailous,
For now the lover is joyous,
Now can he plaine, now can he grone,
Now can he singen, now maken mone,
To day he plaineth for heavinesse,
To morrow he plaineth for jolynesse :
The life of love is full contrarie,
Which stoundomele can oft varie ;
But if thou canst mirthes make,
That men in gre woll gladly take,
Doe it goodly I command thee,
For men should, wheresoever they be,
Doe thing that hem fitting is,
For thereof commeth good loos and pris.
Whereof that thou be vertuous,
Ne be nat straunge ne daungerous :
For if that thou good rider be,
Pricke gladly that men may see ;
In armes also if thou conne,
Pursue till thou a name hast wonne :
And if thy voice be faire and clere,
Thou shalt maken no great daungere.
Whan to sing they goodly pray,
It is thy worship for to obay.:
Also to you it longeth aye,
To harpe and citterne, daunce and playe,
For if he can well foot and daunce,
It may him greatly doe avaunce,
Emong eke for thy lady sake,

Songes and complaintes that thou make,
For that meven in her hart,
When they readen of thy smart.
Looke that no man for scarce thee hold,
For that may greeve thee manifold :
Reason woll that a lover be
In his yeftes more large and free
Than chorles that been not of loving,
For who thereof can any thing,
He shall be lefe aie for to yeve,
In londes lore who so woll leve,
For he that through a sodain sight,
Or for a kissing anon right,
Yave hole his heart, in will and thought,
And to himselfe keepeth right nought,
After this swift, it is good reason,
He yeve his good in abandon.

" Now wol I shortly here reherse,
Of that I have sayd in verse,
All the sentence by and by,
In wordes fewe compendiously,
That thou the better mayest on hem thinke,
Whether so it be thou wake or winke,
For the wordes little greeve,
A man to keepe, when it is breeve.
" Who so with Love woll gone or ride
He mote be courteous, and voide of pride,
Merry and full of jollite,
And of largesse a losed be.
" First I joyne thee here in penaunce
That ever without repentaunce,
Thou set thy thought in thy loving
To last without repenting,
And thinke upon thy mirthes sweet
That shall follow after whan ye meet.
" And for thou true to love shalt be,
I will and commaunde thee,
That in one place thou set all hole
Thine herte, without halfen dole,
For trecherie and sikernesse,
For I loved never doublenesse :
To many his herte that woll depart,
Everich shall have but little part,
But of him drede I me right nought,
That in one place setteth his thought :
Therefore in o place it set,
And let it never thence flet :
For if thou yevest it in lening,
I holde it but wretched thing :
Therefore yeve it whole and quite,
And thou shalt have the more merite.
If it be lent than after soone,
The bountie and the thankes is doone,
But in love, free yeven thing
Requireth a great guerdoning.
" Yeve it in yeft all quite fully,
And make thy gift debonairly :
For men that yeft holde more dere
That yeven is with gladsome chere.
" That gifte nought to praysen is
That man yeveth maugre his :
Whan thou hast yeven thine heart (as I
Have sayd) thee here openly,
Than adventures shull thee fall,
Which hard and heavie been withall :
For oft when thou bethinkest thee
Of thy loving, where so thou be,
Fro folke thou must depart in hie,
That none perceive thy maladie,
But hide thine harme thou must alone,
And go forth sole, and make thy mone :
Thou shalt no while be in o state,
But whilom cold and whilom hate,
Now redde as rose, now yellow and fade,
Such sorow I trow thou never hade :
Cotidien, ne quarteine,
It is not so full of peine,
For often times it shall fall,
In love among thy paines all,
That thou thy selfe all holy,
Foryetten shalt so utterly,
That many times thou shalt bee,
Still as an image of tree,
Domme as a stone, without stirring
Of foote or honde, without speaking.
" Than soone after all thy paine,
To memorie shalt thou come againe,
A man abashed wonder sore,
And after sighen more and more :
For wite thou wele withouten wene,
In such a state full oft have bene,
That have the evill of love assaide,
Wher-through thou art so dismaide.

" After a thought shall take thee so,
That thy love is too ferre the fro :
Thou shalt say, ' God, what may this be,
That I ne may my ladie see ?
Mine heart alone is to her goe,
And I abide all sole in woe,
Departed fro mine owne thought,
And with mine eien se right nought.
" ' Alas mine eyen sene I ne may,
My carefull herte to convay,
Mine hertes guide, but they be,
I praise nothing what ever they se :
Shull they abide than, nay,
But gone and visiten without delay
That mine heart desireth so
For certainly, but if they go.
" ' A foole my selfe I may well hold,
When I ne se what mine hart wold,
Wherefore I woll gone her to sene,
Or eased shall I never bene,
But I have some tokening.'
" Then goest thou forth without dwelling,
But oft thou faylest of thy desire,
Er thou mayest come her any nere,
And wastest in vaine thy passage :
Than fallest thou in a new rage,
For want of sight thou ginnest mourne,
And homeward pensive thou dost retourne :
In great mischiefe than shalt thou bee,
For than againe shall come to thee
Sighes and plaintes with new wo,
That no itching pricketh so :
Who wote it nought, he may goe lere,
Of hem that buyen love so dere.
" Nothing thine heart appeasen may,
That oft thou wolt gone and assay,
If thou maiest seene by adventure
Thy lives joy, thine heartes cure,
So that by grace, if thou might
Attaine of her to have a sight,
Than shalt thou done none other deed,
But with that sight thine eyen feed :
That faire fresh whan thou mayst see,
Thine herte shall so ravished bee,
That never thou wouldest thy thankes lete

Ne remove, for to see that swete :
The more thou seest in soothfastnesse,
The more thou covetest of that sweetnesse :
The more thine herte brenneth in fire,
The more thine herte is in desire.
For who considereth everie dele,
It may be likened wonder wele,
The paine of love unto a fere,
For evermore thou neighest nere,
Thought, or who so that it be,
For verie sooth I tell it thee,
The hotter ever shalt thou brenne,
As experience shall thee kenne,
Where so commest in any cost,
Who is next fire he brenneth most :
And yet forsooth for all thine heat,
Though thou for love swelte and sweat,
Ne for no thing thou felen may,
Thou shalt not willen to passe away,
And though thou goe, yet must thou nede,
Thinke all day on her faire hede,
Whome thou beheld with so good will,
And hold thy selfe beguiled ill,
That thou ne hadst ne hardiment,
To shew her ought of thine entent ;
Thine herte full sore thou wolt dispise,
And eke repreve of cowardise,
That thou so dull in every thing,
Were domme for drede, without speaking.
" Thou shalt eke thinke thou didst folly,
That thou were her so faste by,
And durst not auntre thee to say
Some thing er thou came away,
For thou hadest no more wonne,
To speake of her whan thou begonne :
But yet if she would for thy sake,
In armes goodly thee have take,
It should have be more worth to thee,
Than of treasour great plentee.
" Thus shalt thou mourne and eke complain,
And yet encheson to gone again,
Unto thy walke, or to thy place,
Where thou beheld her fleshly face,
And never for false suspection,
Thou wouldest finde occasion,
For to gone unto her house,
So art thou than desirouse,
A sight of her for to have,
If thou thine honour mightest save,
Or any errand mightest make
Thider, for thy loves sake :
Full faine thou wouldest, but for dreede
Thou goest not, least that men take heede,
Wherefore I read in thy going,
And also in thine againe comming,
Thou be well ware that men ne wit,
Feine thee other cause than it,
To goe that way, or fast bie,
To heale well is no follie :
And if so be it happe thee,
That thou thy love there mayst see,
In siker wise thou her salewe,
Wherewith thy colour woll transmewe,
And eke thy bloud shall all to quake,
Thy hewe eke chaungen for her sake,
But word and wit, with chere full pale
Shull want for to tell thy tale,
And if thou mayest so ferre forth winne,
That thou reason durst beginne,
And wouldest saine three things or mo,
Thou shalt full scarcely saine the two,
Though thou bethinke thee never so wele,
Thou shalt foryete yet somedele.

" But if thou deale with trechery,
For false lovers mowe all fouly
Sain what hem lust withouten dred,
They be so double in hir falshed,
For they in herte can thinke o thing
And saine another, in hir speaking,
And when thy speech is ended all,
Right thus to thee it shall befall :
If any word than come to minde,
That thou to say hast left behinde,
Than thou shalt brenne in great martire,
For thou shalt brenne as any fire,
This is the strife and eke the affraie,
And the battaile that lasteth aie :
This bargaine end may never take,
But if that she thy peace will make.
" And whan the night is commen anon,
A thousand angres shall come upon,
To bed as fast thou wolt thee dight,
There thou shalt have but small delight,
For whan thou wenest for to sleepe,
So full of peine shalt thou creepe,
Stert in thy bed about full wide,
And turne full oft on everie side :
Now downeward groffe, and now upright,
And wallow in woe the longe night,
Thine armes shalt thou sprede abrede,
As man in warre were forwerede.
Than shalt the come a remembraunce
Of her shape and her semblaunce,
Whereto none other may be pere,
And wete thou well without were,
That thee shall see sometime that night,
That thou hast her, that is so bright,
Naked betweene thine armes there,
All soothfastnesse as though it were ;
Thou shalt make castles than in Spaine,
And dreame of joy, all but in vaine,
And thee delighten of right nought,
While thou so slumbrest in that thought,
That is so swecte and delitable,
The which in sooth n'is but a fable,
For it ne shall no while last ;
Than shalt thou sigh and weepe fast,
And say ' Deere God, what thing is this,
My dreame is turned all amis,
Which was full sweet and apparent :
But now I wake it is all shent,
Now yede this merry thought away,
Twentie times upon a day
I would this thought would come againe,
For it alleggeth well my paine,
It maketh me full of joyfull thought,
It sleeth me that it lasteth nought.
Ah Lord, why nill ye me succour ?
The joy I trow that I langour,
The death I would me shoulde slo,
While I lye in her armes two,
Mine harme is hard withouten wene,
My great unease full oft I mene.

" ' But woulde Love do so I might
Have fully joy of her so bright,
My paine were quit me richely,
Alas too great a thing aske I :
It is but folly, and wrong wening,

To aske so outragious a thing,
And who so asketh follily,
He mote be warned hastily,
And I ne wote what I may say,
I am so ferre out of the way,
For I would have full great liking,
And full great joy of lasse thing,
For would she of her gentlenesse,
Withouten more, me ones kesse,
It were to me a great guerdon,
Release of all my passion:
But it is hard to come thereto,
All is but folly that I do,
So high I have mine herte set,
Where I may no comfort get,
I wote not where I say well or nought,
But this I wote well in my thought,
That it were bette of her alone
For to stint my woe and mone:
A looke on her I cast goodly,
That for to have all utterly,
Of another all hole the play.
Ah Lord, where I shall bide the day
That ever she shall my ladie be,
He is full cured, that may her see.
Ah God, when shall the dawning spring,
To liggen thus as an angrie thing,
I have no joy thus here to lye,
When that my love is not me bye:
A man to lyen hath great disease,
Which may not sleepe ne rest in ease,
I would it dawed, and were now day,
And that the night were went away,
For were it day, I would up rise,
Ah slowe Sunne, shew thine enprise,
Speede thee to spread thy beames bright,
And chase the darknesse of the night,
To put away the stoundes strong,
Which in me lasten all too long.'
"The night shalt thou continue so,
Without rest, in paine and wo,
If ever thou knew of love distresse,
Thou shalt mo learne in that sicknesse,
And thus enduring shalt thou lye,
And rise on morow up earlye,
Out of thy bed, and harneis thee
Er ever dawning thou maiest see:
All privily than shalt thou gone,
What whider it be, thy selfe alone,
For raine, or haile, for snow, for slete,
Thider she dwelleth that is so swete,
The which may fall asleepe bee,
And thinketh but little upon thee.
Than shalt thou goe, full foule aferde,
Looke if the gate be unsperde,
And waite without in woe and paine,
Full evill a cold in mind and raine:
Than shalt thou goe the dore before,
If thou mayest finde any shore,
Or hole, or reft, what ever it were,
Than shalt thou stoupe, and lay to eare
If they within a sleepe be,
I meane all save thy ladie free,
Whom waking if thou mayest espie,
Goe put thy selfe in jeopardie,
To aske grace, and thee bimene,
That she may wete without wene,
That thou all night no rest hast had,
So sore for her thou were bestad.
"Women well ought pitie to take
Of hem that sorrowen for hir sake.
And looke for love of that relike,
That thou thinke none other like,
For whan thou hast so great annoy,
Shall kisse thee er thou goe away,
And hold that in full great deintee,
And for that no man shall thee see
Before the house, ne in the way,
Looke thou be gon againe er day.
Suche comming, and suche going,
Such heavinesse, and such walking,
Maketh lovers withouten wene,
Under hir clothes pale and lene,
For Love leaveth colour ne clearnesse,
Who loveth trew hath no fatnesse,
Thou shalt well by thy selfe see
That thou must needs assaied bee:
For men that shape hem other way
Falsely hir ladies to betray,
It is no wonder though they be fatte,
With false othes her loves they gatte,
For oft I see such losengeours
Fatter than abbots or priours.
"Yet with o thing I thee charge,
That is to say, that thou be large
Unto the maid, that her doth serve,
So best her thanke thou shalt deserve.
Yeve her giftes, and get her grace,
For so thou may thanke purchace,
That she thee worthy hold and free,
Thy ladie, and all that may thee see.
Also her servaunts worship aie,
And please as muche as thou maie,
Great good through hem may come to thee,
Because with her they been privee:
They shall her tell how they thee fand
Curteous and wise, and well doand,
And she shall preise well thee more.
Looke out of lond thou be not fore,
And if such cause thou have, that thee
Behoveth to gone out of countree,
Leave hole thine herte in hostage,
Till thou againe make thy passage,
Thinke long to see the swete thing
That hath thine heart in her keeping.
"Now have I told thee, in what wise
A lover shall doe me servise,
Do it than, if thou wolte have
The mede that thou after crave."

When Love all this had boden me,
I said him: "Sir, how may it be
That lovers may in such manere,
Endure the paine ye have sayd here?
I marvaile me wonder fast,
How any man may live or last
In suche paine, and such brenning,
In sorrow and thought, and such sighing,
Aie unreleased woe to make,
Whether so it be they sleepe or wake,
In such annoy continually,
As helpe me God this marvaile I
How man, but he were made of steele,
Might live a moneth, such pains to feele."

The God of love then sayd me,
"Friend, by the faith I owe to thee,
May no man have good, but he it buy:
A man loveth more tenderly
The thing that he hath bought most dere.

For wete thou well without were,
In thanke that thing is taken more,
For which a man hath suffred sore :
Certes no woe ne may attaine,
Unto the sore of loves paine,
None evill thereto ne may amount,
No more than a man count
The drope that of the water bee :
For drie as well the grete see
Thou mightest, as the harmes tell
Of hem that with Love dwell
In service, for paine hem sleeth,
And that eche would flee the death
And trowe they should never escape,
Nere that hope couth hem make,
Glad as man in prison sete,
And may not getten for to ete
But barly bread, and water pure,
And lyeth in vermin and in ordure,
With all this yet can he live,
Good hope such comfort hath him yeve,
Which maketh wene that he shall be
Delivered and come to libertie,
In fortune is full trust,
Though he lye in straw or dust,
In hope is all his sustaining :
And so faire lovers in her wening,
Which love hath set in his prison
Good hope is her salvation :
Good hope (how sore that they smart)
Yeveth hem both will and hart
To profer her body to martire,
For hope so sore doth hem desire
To suffer each harme that men devise,
For joy that afterward shall arise.

" Hope in desire catch victorie,
In hope of love is all the glorie,
For hope is all that love may yeve,
Nere hope, there should no lenger live.
Blessed be hope, which with desire,
Avaunceth lovers in such manire.
Good hope is curteis for to please,
To keepe lovers from all disease.
Hope keepeth his lond, and woll abide,
For any perill that may betide,
For hope to lovers, as most chiefe,
Doth hem endure all mischiefe,
Hope is hir helpe whan mistere is.
And I shall yeve thee eke ywis,
Three other thinges, that great sollace
Doth to hem that be in my lace.
" The firste good that may be found,
To hem that in my lace be bound,
Is swete thought, for to record
Thing wherewith thou canst accord
Best in thine herte, where she be,
Thinking in absence is good to thee.
Whan any lover doth complaine,
And liveth in distresse and in paine
Than swete thought shall come as blive,
Away his anger for to drive,
It maketh lovers to have remembraunce
Of comfort, and of high plesaunce,
That hope hath hight him for to winne,
For thought anone than shall beginne,
As farre God wote as he can finde,
To make a mirrour of his minde,
For to behold he woll not let,
Her person he shall afore him set,
Her laughing eyen persaunt and clere,
Her shape, her form, her goodly chere,
Her mouth that is so gracious,
So swete, and eke so savourous,
Of all her feyters he shall take heed,
His eyen with all her limmes feed.
" Thus swete thinking shall aswage
The paine of lovers, and hir rage,
Thy joy shall double without gesse
Whan thou thinkest on her seemelinesse,
Or of her laughing, or of her chere
That to thee made thy lady dere,
This comfort woll I that thou take,
And if the next thou wolt forsake
Which is not lesse saverous,
Thou shouldest not ben too daungerous.

" The second shall be swete speche,
That hath to many one be leche,
To bring hem out of woe and were,
And helpe many a bachelere,
And many a ladie sent succour,
That have loved paramour,
Through speaking, whan they might heare,
Of hir lovers to hem so deare :
To me it voideth all hir smart,
The which is closed in hir hart.
In heart it maketh hem glad and light,
Speech, whan they mowe have sight.
And therefore now it commeth to mind,
In olde dawes as I find,
That clerkes written that her knew,
There was a ladie fresh of hew,
Which of her love made a song,
On him for to remember among,
In which she sayd, 'Whan that I heare
Speaken of him that is so deare,
To me it voideth all smart,
Ywis he sitteth so nere mine hart,
To speake of him at eve or morrow,
It cureth me of all my sorrow,
To me is none so high pleasaunce
As of his person daliaunce :'
She wist full well that sweet speaking
Comforteth in full muche thing,
Her love she had full well assaide,
Of him she was full well apaide,
To speake of him her joy was set.
Therefore I read thee that thou get
A fellow that can well counsele,
And keepe thy counsaile, and welhele
To whom goe shew wholly thine hart
Both wele and woe, joy and smart :
To get comfort to him thou go,
And prively between you two,
Ye shall speake of that goodly thing,
That hath thine heart in her keeping,
Of her beaute and her semblaunce,
And of her goodly countenaunce,
Of all thy state, thou shalt him say,
And aske him counsaile how thou may,
Do any thing that may her please,
For it to theo shall doe great ease,
That he may wete thou trust him so,
Both of thy wele and of thy wo.
And if his heart to love be sette,
His companie is much the bette,
For reason woll he shew to thee
All utterly his privite,
And what she is he loveth so

To thee plainly he shall undo,
Without drede of any shame,
Both tell her renome and her name.
Than shall he further farre and nere,
And namely to thy ladie dere
In siker wise, ye every other,
Shall helpen as his owne brother,
In trouthe without doublenesse,
And keepen close in sikernesse:
For it is noble thing in fay,
To have a man thou darste say
Thy privie counsaile everie dele,
For that woll comfort thee right wele,
And thou shalt hold thee well apaide,
When such a friend thou hast assaide.

"The thirde good of great comfort
That yeveth to lovers most disport,
Commeth of sight and beholding,
That cleped is swete looking,
The whiche may thee none ease do,
Whan thou art ferre thy ladie fro,
Wherefore thou prese alway to be
In place, where thou mayest her see:
For it is thing most amerous
Most delectable and saverous,
For to asswage a mannes sorrow
To seen his ladie by the morrow,
For it is a full noble thing
Whan thine eyen have meeting,
With that relike precious,
Whereof they be so desirous.
But all day after sooth it is,
They have no drede to faren amis,
They dreden neither winde ne raine,
Ne none other manner paine:
For when thine eyen were thus in blisse,
Yet of her courtesie ywisse
Alone they cannot have hir joy,
But to the herte they convoy
Part of hir blisse, to him thou send,
Of all this harme to make an end.
"The eye is a good messenger,
Which can to the heart in such manner
Tidinges sende, that hath sene
To voide him of his paines clene:
Whereof the heart rejoyseth so
That a great partie of his wo
Is voided, and put away to flight.
Right as the darkenesse of the night
Is chased with clerenesse of the moone,
Right so is all his woe full soone
Devoided cleane, whan that the sight
Beholden may that fresh wight
That the herte desireth so,
That all his darknesse is ago,
For than the herte is all at ease,
Whan they seen that may hem please.
"Now have I declared thee all out,
Of that thou were in dread and dout,
For I have told thee faithfully,
What thee may curen utterly,
And all lovers that woll be
Faithfull, and full of stabilite,
Good hope alway keepe by thy side,
And sweet thought make eke abide,
Sweet looking and sweet speche,
Of all thine harmes they shall be leche,
Of everie thou shalt have great pleasaunce,
If thou canst bide in sufferaunce,
And serve well without feintise,
Thou shalt be quite of thine emprise
With more guerdoun, if that thou live,
But all this time this I thee yeve."

The god of love, whan all the day
Had taught me, as ye have heard say,
And enformed compendously,
He vanished away all sodainly,
And I alone left all sole,
So full of complaint and of dole,
For I saw no man there me by.
My woundes me greeved wondersly,
Me for to curen nothing I knewe,
Save the bothum bright of hewe,
Whereon was sette hooly my thought,
Of other comfort knew I nought,
But it were through the God of Love,
I knew nat else to my behove
That might me ease or comfort gette,
But if he would him entermette.
The roser was withouten dout
Closed with an hedge without,
As ye toforne have heard me saine,
And fast I besied, and would faine
Have passed the haie, if I might
Have getten in by any sleight
Unto the bothum so faire to see,
But ever I dradde blamed to bee,
If men would have suspection
That I would of entention
Have stole the roses that there were,
Therefore to enter I was in fere.
But at the last, as I bethought
Whether I should passe or nought,
I sawe come with a glad chere
To me, a lusty bachelere,
Of good stature and of good height,
And Bialacoil forsooth he height:
Sonne he was to Curtesie,
And he me graunted full gladly,
The passage of the utter hay,
And sayd: "Sir, how that you may
Passe, if your will bee
The freshe roser for to see:
And ye the swete savour fele,
Your warrans may right wele,
So thou thee keepe fro folly,
Shall no man doe thee villany,
If I may helpe you in ought,
I shall not faine, dredeth nought,
For I am bound to your servise,
Fully devoid of feintise."
Than unto Bialacoil sayd I,
"I thanke you sir full hartely,
And your behest take at gree,
That ye so goodly profer mee,
To you it commeth of great fraunchise,
That ye me profer your servise."
Than after full deliverly,
Through the breres anon went I,
Whereof encombred was the haie,
I was well pleased, the soth to saie,
To se the bothum faire and swote,
So freshe sprong out of the rote.

And Bialacoil me served wele,
Whan I so nigh me might fele
Of the bothum the sweet odour,
And so lusty hewed of colour:

But than a chorle, foule him betide,
Beside the roses gan him hide,
To keepe the roses of that rosere,
Of whom the name was DAUNGERE:
This chorle was hid there in the greves,
Covered with grasse and with leves,
To spie and take whom that he fond
Unto that roser put an hond.
He was not sole, for there was mo,
For with him were other two
Of wicked manners, and evill fame,
That one was cleped by his name,
Wicked Tongue, God yeve him sorrow,
For neither at eve ne at morrow,
He can of no man good speake,
On many a just man doth he wreake.
There was a woman that eke hight
SHAME, that who can reckon right,
Trespasse was her fathers name,
Her mother Reason, and thus was Shame
Brought of these ilke two:
And yet had Trespasse never ado
With Reason, ne never leie her by,
He was hidous and so ugly,
I meane this that Trespasse hight,
But Reason conceiveth of a sight,
Shame of that I spake aforne.
And whan that Shame was thus borne,
It was ordained, that Chastite,
Should of the roser ladie be:
Which of the bothums more and las,
With sundrie folkes assailed was,
That she ne wiste what to do,
For Venus her assaileth so,
That night and day for her she stall
Bothums and roses over all.
To Reason than prayeth Chastite,
Whom Venus hath flemed over the see,
That she her daughter would her lene,
To keepe the roser fresh and grene.
Anon Reason to Chastite
Is fully assented that it be,
And graunted her at her request,
That Shame, because she is honest,
Shall keeper of the roser be:
And thus to keepe it, there were three,
That none should hardy be ne bold,
(Were he young or were he old)
Againe her will away to bere
Bothums ne roses, that there were.
I had well sped, had I nat been
Awaited with these three, and seen:
For Bialacoil, that was so faire,
So gracious and debonaire,
Quitte him to me full courteously,
And me to please badde that I,
Should drawe to the bothum nere,
Prese in to touche the rosere
Which bare the roses, he yave me leve,
This graunt ne might but little greve:
And for he saw it liked me,
Right nigh the bothum pulled he
A leafe all grene, and yave me that
The which full nigh the bothum sat.
I made of that leafe full queint,
And whan I felt was acqueint
With Bialacoil, and so prive,
I wende all my will had be.
Than wext I hardy for to tell
To Bialacoil how me befell,
Of love, that tooke and wounded me,
And sayd: "Sir, so mote I thee,
I may no joy have in no wise,
Upon no side, but it arise,
For sithe (if I shall not faine)
In herte I have had so great paine,
So great annoy, and such affraie,
That I ne wotte what I shall saie,
I drede your wrothe to deserve,
Lever me were, that knives kerve
My bodie should in peces small,
Than in any wise it should fall,
That ye wrothed should been with me."
"Say boldely thy will" (quod he)
"I nill be wroth if that I may,
For nought that thou shalt to me say."

THAN sayd I, "Sir, not you displese,
To knowen of my great unease,
In which only love hath me brought,
For paines great, disease and thought,
Fro day to day it doth me drie,
Supposeth not, sir, that I lie,
In me five woundes did he make,
The sore of which shall never slake,
But ye the bothum graunt me,
Which is most passaunt of beaute,
My life, my death, and my martire,
And treasour that I most desire."
Than Bialacoil affraied all
Sayd "Sir, it may not fall,
That ye desire it may not arise,
What would ye shend me in this wise:
A mokell foole than I were,
If I suffred you away to beare
The fresh bothum, so faire of sight,
For it were neither skill ne right,
Of the roser ye broke the rinde,
Or take the rose aforne his kinde;
Ye are not courteous to aske it,
Let it still on the roser sit,
And let it grow till it amended be,
And perfectly come to beaute,
I nolde not that it pulled were,
Fro the roser that it bere,
To me it is so lefe and dere."
With that anon start out Daungere,
Out of the place where he was hidde,
His malice in his chere was kidde:
Full great he was and blacke of hewe,
Sturdy, and hidous, who so him knewe,
Like sharpe urchons his haire was grow,
His eyes red sparkling as the fire glow,
His nose frounced full kyked stood,
He come criand as he were wood,
And sayd, "Bialacoil, tell me why
Thou bringest hider so boldely
Him that so nigh the rosere,
Thou worchest in a wrong manere,
He thinketh to dishonour thee,
Thou art well worthy to have maugre,
To let him of the rosere witte,
Who serveth a felon is evill quitte.
"Thou wouldest have done great bountee,
And he with shame would quite thee,
Fly hence, fellow, I rede thee go,
It wanteth little he woll thee slo,
For Bialacoil ne knew thee nought,
Whan thee to serve he set his thought,
For thou wolt shame him if thou might,

Both againe reson and right,
I woll no more in thee affie,
That commest so slightly for t'espie:
For it prooveth wonder wele,
Thy sleight and treason everie dele."
I durst no more make there abode,
For the chorle he was so wode,
So gan he threat and menace,
And through the haie he did me chace,
For feare of him I trembled and quoke,
So chorlishly his head he shoke,
And sayd, if eft he might me take,
I should not from his hands scape.
Than Bialacoil is fled and mate,
And I all soole disconsolate,
Was left alone in paine and thought,
Fro shame to death I was nigh brought.
Than thought I on my high folly,
How that my bodie utterly,
Was yeve to paine and to martire,
And thereto had I so great ire,
That I ne durst the haies passe,
There was no hope, there was no grace,
I trow never man wist of paine,
But he were laced in Love's chaine,
Ne no man, and sooth it is,
But if he love, what anger is.
Love holdeth his hest to me right wele,
Whan paine (he sayd) I should fele,
No herte may thinke, no tongue saine,
A quarter of my woe and paine,
I might not with the anger last,
Mine heart in point was for to brast,
Whan I thought on the rose, that so,
Was through Daunger cast me fro,
A long while stoode I in that state,
Till that me sawe so madde and mate,
The ladie of the high ward,
Which from her tower looked thiderward.
Reason, men clepe that lady,
Which from her tower deliverly,
Come downe to me without more.
But she was neither young, ne hore,
Ne high ne low, ne fat ne leane,
But best, as it were in a meane:
Her eyen two were clere and light
As any candle that brenneth bright,
And on her head she had a croune,
Her seemed well an high persoune:
For round environ her crounet
Was full of riche stones fret.
Her goodly semblaunt by devise,
I trow was made in Paradise,
For nature had never such a grace,
To forge a worke of such compace:
For certain, but if the letter lye,
God him selfe, that is so hye,
Made her after his image,
And yafe her sith such avantage,
That she hath might and seignory
To keepe men from all folly,
Who so woll trowe her lore,
Ne may offenden nevermore.
And while I stoode this darke and pale,
Reason began to me her tale,
She saied: "Alhaile my swete frend,
Folly and childhood woll thee shend,
Which thee have put in great affray,
Thou hast bought dere time of May,
That made thine herte merrie to be
In evill time thou wentest to see
The gardin, whereof Idlenesse
Bare the key and was maistresse
Whan thou yedest in the daunce
With her, and had acquaintaunce:
Her acquaintance is perillous,
First soft, and after noyous,
She hath thee trashed without wene,
The god of love had thee not sene,
Ne had Idlenesse thee convaid
In the verge where Mirth him pleid,
If Folly have surprised thee,
Do so that it recovered be,
And be well ware to take no more
Counsaile, that greeveth after sore:
He is wise, that woll himselfe chastise.
"And though a young man in any wise
Trespasse among, and do folly,
Let him nat tarie, but hastely
Let him amend what so be mis,
And eke I counsaile thee ywis,
The god of love hooly foryet,
That hath thee in such paine set,
And thee in herte tormenteth so,
I cannot seen how thou maist go
Other waies thee to garisoun,
For Daunger, that is so feloun,
Felly purposeth thee to werrey,
Which is full cruell the sooth to sey.

"And yet of Daunger cometh no blame,
In reward of my daughter Shame,
Which hath the roses in her ward,
As she that may be no musard,
And Wicked Tongue is with these two,
That suffreth no man thider go,
For er a thing be do he shall,
Where that he commeth over all,
In fortie places, if it be sought,
Saie thing that never was done ne wrought,
So much treason is in his male,
Of falsenesse for to faine a tale:
Thou dealest with angrie folke ywis,
Wherefore to thee better is,
From these folke away to fare,
For they woll make thee live in care;
This is the evill that love they call,
Wherein there is but folly all,
For love is folly everie dele;
Who loveth, in no wise may do wele,
Ne set his thought on no good werke,
His schoole he leseth, if he be a clerke,
Or other craft eke, if that he be,
He shall not thrive therein, for he
In love shall have more passioun,
Than monke, hermite, or chanoun:
This paine is hard out of measure,
The joy may eke no while endure,
And in the possession,
Is much tribulation,
The joye it is so short lasting,
And but in hap is the getting;
For I see there many in travaile,
That at last foule faile,
I was nothing thy counsailer,
Whan thou were made the homager
Of god of love too hastely:
Where was no wisedome but folly,
Thine herte was jolly, but not sage,
Whan thou were brought in such a rage,

To yelde thee so readyly,
And to Love of his great maistrie.

"I REDE thee Love away to drive,
That maketh the recche not of thy live,
The folly more fro day to day
Shall growe, but thou it put away;
Take with thy teeth the bridle fast,
To daunt thy herte, and eke the cast
If that thou mayest, to get the defence
For to redresse thy first offence.
Who so his herte alway woll leve,
Shall finde among that shall him greve."
Whan I heard her thus me chastise,
I answeard in full angrie wise,
I prayed her cesse of her speach,
Either to chastise me or teach,
To bidde me my thought refrein,
Which Love hath caught in his demein:
"What wene ye Love woll consent,
(That me assaieth with bowe bent)
To draw mine herte out of his hond,
Which is so quickly in his bond?
That ye counsaile, may never bee,
For whan he first arested mee,
He tooke mine herte so sore him till,
That it is nothing at my will,
He tought it so him for to obey,
That he it sparred with a key.
I pray you let me be all still,
For ye may well, if that ye will,
Your wordes wast in idlenesse,
For utterly withouten gesse,
All that ye sain is but in vaine,
Me were lever die in the paine,
Than Love to me ward should arette,
Falshed or treason on me sette,
I woll me get pris or blame,
And love true to save my name,
Who that me chastiseth, I him hate."
With that word, Reason went her gate,
Whan she saw for no sermoning
She might me fro my folly bring.
Than dismayed I left all soole,
Forwearie, forwandred as a foole,
For I ne knew ne cherisaunce.
Than fell into my remembraunce,
How Love bad me to purvey
A fellow, to whome I might sey
My counsaile and my privite,
For that shuld much availe me.
With that bethought I me, that I
Had a fellowe faste by,
True and siker, courteous, and hend,
And he called was by name a frend,
A truer fellowe was no where none,
In hast to him I went anone,
And to him all my woe I told,
Fro him right nought I would withhold,
I told him all without were,
And made my complaint on Daungere,
How for to see he was hidous,
And to me ward contrarious,
The whiche through his cruelte,
Was in point to have meimed me,
With Bialacoil whan he me sey
Within the gardin walke and pley,
Fro me he made him for to goe,
And I be left alone in woe:
I durst no longer with him speake,
For Daunger sayd he would be wreake,
Whan that he sawe how I went,
The freshe bothum for to hent,
If I were hardie to come nere,
Betweene the haie and the rosere.
This frend when he wist of my thought,
He discomforted me right nought,
But saied, "Fellow, be nat so madde,
Ne so abashed nor bestadde,
My selfe I know full well Daungere,
And how he is fierce of chere,
At prime temps, Love to manace,
Full oft I have beene in his case;
A felon first though that he be,
After thou shalt him souple see;
Of long passed I knew him wele,
Ungodly first though men him fele,
He woll meeke after in his bering
Been, for service and obeissing:
I shall thee tell what thou shalt do:
Meekely I rede thou go him to,
Of herte pray him specially
Of thy trespace to have mercy,
And hote him well here to please,
That thou shalt never more him displease:
Who can best serve of flattery,
Shall please Daunger utterly."
My friend hath saied to me so wele,
That he me eased hath somedele,
And eke allegged of my tourment,
For through him had I hardement
Againe to Daunger for to go,
To preve if I might meeke him so.

To Daunger came I all ashamed,
The which aforne me had blamed,
Desiring for to pease my wo,
But over hedge durst I not go,
For he forbode me the passage:
I found him cruell in his rage,
And in his hond a great bourdoun,
To him I kneeled low adoun,
Full meeke of port, and simple of chere,
And saied, "Sir, I am comen here
Onely to aske of you mercy,
It greeveth me full greatly
That ever my life I wrathed you,
But for to amend I am come now,
With all my might, both loud and still,
To doen right at your owne will,
For Love made me for to do
That I have trespassed hiderto,
Fro whom I ne may withdraw mine herte,
Yet shall I never for joy ne smart
(What so befall good or ill)
Offende more againe your will,
Lever I have endure disease,
Than do that should you displease.

"I you require, and pray that ye
Of me have mercy and pite,
To stint your ire that greveth so,
That I woll sweare for evermo
To be redressed at your liking
If I trespace in any thing,
Save that (I pray thee) graunt me
A thing, that may nat warned be,
That I may love all onely,
None other thing of you aske I:

I shall doen all ywis,
If of your grace ye graunt me this,
And ye may not letten mee,
For well wote ye that love is free:
And I shall loven such that I will,
Whoever like it well or ill:
And yet ne would I not for all Fraunce
Doe thing to do you displeasaunce."
Than Daunger fell in his entent
For to foryeve his male talent,
But all his wrathe yet at last
He hath released, I praide so fast:
"Shortly" (he saied) "thy request
Is not too mokell dishonest,
Ne I woll not werne it thee,
For yet nothing engreeveth mee:
For though thou love thus evermore,
To me is neither soft ne sore:
Love where that thee list, what reccheth me,
So ferre fro my roses be:
Trust not on me for none assaie,
In any time to passe the haie."
Thus hath he graunted my prayere,
Than went I forth withouten were
Unto my frend, and told him all,
Which was right joyfull of my tale,
(He saied) "Now goeth well thine affaire,
He shall to thee be debonaire,
Though he aforne was dispitous,
He shall hereafter be gracious:
If he were touched on some good veine,
He should yet rewen on thy peine,
Suffer I rede, and no boast make,
Til thou at goodness maist him take."
By suffraunce, and by wordes soft,
A man may overcome oft
Him that aforne he had in drede,
In bookes soothly as I rede.
Thus hath my friend with great comfort
Avaunced me with high disport,
Which would me good, as much as I:
And than anon full sodainely
I tooke my leave, and streight I went
Unto the haie, for great talent
I had to seene the fresh bothum,
Wherein lay my salvation,
And Daunger tooke keepe, if that I
Keepe him covenaunt truely;
So sore I dread his manacing,
I durst not breake his bidding,
For least that I were of him shent,
I brake not his commaundement,
For to purchase his good will,
It was for to come there till,
His mercy was too ferre behind
I kept, for I ne might it find.
I complained and sighed sore,
And languished evermore,
For I durst nat overgo,
Unto the rose I loved so,
Throughout my deeming utterly,
That he had knowledge certainly:
Than Love me ladde in such a wise,
That in me there was no feintise,
Falshood, ne no trecherie:
And yet he full of villanie,
Of disdaine, and crueltie,
On me ne would have pitie
His cruell will for to refraine,
Tho I wept alway, and me complaine.

And while I was in this turment,
Were come of grace, by God sent,
Fraunchise, and with her Pity,
Fulfilde the bothum of bounty:
They go to Daunger anon right
To ferther me with all hir might,
And helpe in worde and in deed,
For well they saw that it was need.
First of her grace dame Fraunchise
Hath taken of this emprise:
She saied, "Daunger great wrong ye do
To worche this man so much wo,
Or pinen him so angerly,
It is to you great villany:
I cannot see why ne how
That he hath trespassed againe you,
Save that he loveth, wherfore ye shold
The more in charitie of him hold:
The force of love maketh him do this,
Who would him blame he did amis.
He leveth more than he may do,
His paine is hard, ye may see lo:
And love in no wise would consent
That ye have power to repent,
For though that quicke ye would him slo,
Fro love his herte may nat go.
"Now swete sir, it is your case
Him for to anger or disease.
Alas, what may it you avaunce
To doen to him so great greavaunce?
What worship is it againe him take,
Or on your man a werre make,
Sith he so lowly every wise
Is ready, as ye lust devise?
If Love have caught him in his laas,
You for to beye in every caas,
And been your subject at your will,
Should ye therefore willen him ill?
Ye shuld him spare more all out,
Than him that is both proud and stout:
Courtesie would that ye succoure
Hem that been meeke under your cure:
His herte is hard that woll not meeke,
Whan men of meekenesse him beseeke."

"This is certaine," saied Pitie,
"We see oft that humilitie,
Both ire, and also felonie
Venquisheth, and also malanchollie,
To stonde forth in such duresse
This crueltie and wickednesse:
Wherefore I pray you, sir Daungere
For to maintaine no lenger here
Such cruell warre againe your man,
As wholly yours as ever he can,
Nor that ye worchen no more wo
Upon this caitife that languisheth so,
Which woll no more to you trespace,
But put him wholly in your grace:
His offence ne was but lite,
The god of love it was to wite,
That he your thrall so greatly is,
And if ye harme him ye doen amis,
For he hath had full hard pennaunce,
Sith that ye reft him thaquaintaunce,
Of Bialacoil, his most joie,
Which all his paines might accoie:
He was before annoyed sore,
But than ye doubled him well more,
For he of blisse hath been full bare,

Sith Bialacoil was fro him fare:
Love hath to him great distresse,
He hath no need of more duresse:
Voideth from him your ire I rede,
Ye may not winnen in this dede,
Maketh Bialacoil repaire againe,
And haveth pitie upon his paine,
For Fraunchise woll, and I Pite,
That mercifull to him ye be,
And sith that she and I accorde,
Have upon him misericorde,
For I you pray, and eke moneste,
Nought to refusen our requeste:
For he is hard and fell of thought,
That for us two woll doe right nought."
Daunger ne might no more endure,
He meeked him unto measure.
"I woll in no wise," saieth Daungere,
"Denie that ye have asked here:
It were too great uncourtesie,
I woll he have the companie
Of Bialacoil, as ye devise,
I woll him let in no wise."
To Bialacoil than went in hie,
Fraunchise, and saied full curteslie:
"Ye have too long be deignous
Unto this lover, and daungerous
Fro him to withdraw your presence,
Which hath do to him great offence,
That ye not would upon him see,
Wherefore a sorrowfull man is hee:
Shape ye to pay him, and to please,
Of my love if ye woll have ease,
Fulfill his will, sith that ye know
Daunger is daunted and brought low
Through helpe of me and of Pite
You dare no more aferde be."
"I shall do right as ye will"
Saith Bialacoil, "for it is skill,
Sith Daunger woll that it so be:"
Than Fraunchise hath him sent to me.

Bialacoil at the beginning
Salued me in his comming,
No straungenesse was in him seene,
No more than he had wrathed been,
As faire semblaunt than shewed he me,
And goodly, as aforne did he,
And by the honde without dout,
Within the haie right all about,
He lad me with right good chere,
All environ the vergere,
That Daungere had me chased fro:
Nor have I leave over all to go,
Now am I raised at my devise
Fro Hell unto Paradise.
Thus Bialacoil of gentlenesse
With all his paine and businesse,
Hath shewed me onely of grace
The efters of the swote place.
I saw the rose when I was nigh,
Was greater woxen, and more high,
Freshe, roddy, and faire of hew,
Of colour ever iliche new:
And whan I had it long seene,
I saw that through the leaves greene,
The rose spread to spannishing,
To seene it was a goodly thing,
But it ne was so sprede on brede,
That men within might know the sede,
For it covert was and close
Both with the leaves and with the rose,
The stalke was even and grene upright,
It was thereon a goodly sight,
And well the better without wene
For the seede was not sene,
Full faire it sprad, the god of blesse,
For such another, as I gesse,
Aforne ne was, ne more vermeile,
I was abawed for marveile,
For ever the fairer that it was,
The more I am bounden in Loves laas.
Long I abode there sooth to say,
Till Bialacoil I gan to pray,
Whan that I saw him in no wise
To me warnen his servise,
That he me would graunt a thing,
Which to remember is well fitting:
This is to saine, that of his grace
He would me yeve leisure and space
To me that was so desirous
To have a kissing precious
Of the goodly fresh rose,
That so sweetly smelleth in my nose,
"For if it you displeased nought,
I woll gladly, as I have sought,
Have a kiss thereof freely
Of your yeft, for certainely
I woll none have but by your leve,
So loth me were you for to greve."

He saied, "Frend, so God me spede,
Of Chastitie I have such drede,
Thou shouldest not warned be for me,
But I dare not for Chastite:
Againe her dare I not misdo,
For alway biddeth she me so
To yeve no lover leave to kisse,
For who therto may winnen ywisse,
He of the surplus of the praie
May live in hope to get some day,
For who so kissing may attaine,
Of loves paine hath (sooth to saine)
The best and moste avenaunt,
And earnest of the remenaunt."

Of his answere I sighed sore,
I durst assay him tho no more,
I had such drede to greve him aye;
A man shuld not too much assaye
To chafe his friend out of measure,
Nor put his life in aventure;
For no man at the first stroke
Ne may not fell downe an oke,
Nor of the reisins have the wine,
Till grapes be ripe and well afine,
Be sore empressed, I you ensure,
And drawen out of the pressure:
But I forpeined wonder strong,
Though that I abode right long
And after the kisse, in paine and wo,
Sith I to kisse desired so:
Till that renning on my distresse,
There come Venus the goddesse
(Which aye werrieth Chastite)
Came of her grace to succour me,
Whose might is know ferre and wide,
For she is mother of Cupide,
The god of Love, blinde as stone,
That helpeth lovers many one.

This lady brought in her right hond
Of brenning fire a blasing brond,
Whereof the flame and hote fire
Hath many a lady in desire
Of love brought, and sore hette,
And in her service her herte is sette.
This lady was of good entayle,
Right wonderfull of apparaile,
By her attire so bright and shene,
Men might perceive well and sene,
She was not of religioun :
Nor I nill make mentioun
Nor of robe, nor of treasour,
Of broche, neither of her rich attour,
Ne of her girdle about her side,
For that I n'ill not long abide,
But knoweth well, that certainly
She was arraied richely ;
Devoid of pride certaine she was,
To Bialacoil she went apaas,
And to him shortely in a clause
She said : " Sir, what is the cause
Ye ben of port so daungerous
Unto this lover, and dainous,
To graunt him nothing but a kisse ?
To warne it him ye done amisse,
Sith well ye wot, how that hee
Is Loves servaunt, as ye may see,
And hath beautie, wherthrough he is
Worthy of love to have the blis :
How he is seemely behold and see,
How he is faire, how he is free,
How he is swote and debonaire,
Of age young, lusty, and faire,
There is no lady so hautaine,
Duchesse, countesse, ne chastelaine,
That I nolde hold her ungodly,
For to refuse him utterly.
" His breath is also good and swete,
And eke his lips roddy and mete,
Onely to plaine, and to kiss,
Graunt him a kisse of gentleness.
" His teeth arn also white and clene,
Me thinketh wrong withouten wene,
If ye now warne him, trusteth me,
To graunt that a kisse have he,
The lasse ye helpe him that ye haste,
And the more time shull ye waste."
Whan the flame of the very brond
That Venus brought in her right hond,
Had Bialacoil with his hete smete,
Anone he bad me withouten lete,
Graunt to me the rose kisse,
Than of my paine I gan to lisse,
And to the rose anon went I,
And kissed it full faithfully:
There need no man aske if I was blith,
Whan the savour soft and lith
Stroke to mine herte without more,
And me allegged of my sore,
So was I full of joy and blisse,
It is faire such a floure to kisse,
It was so swote and saverous,
I might not be so anguishous,
That I mote glad and jolly be,
Whan that I remembre me,
Yet ever among soothly to saine,
I suffer noie and muche paine.

The see may never be so still,
That with a little wind at will
Overwhelme and tourne also,
As it were wood in wawes go,
After the calme the trouble soone
Mote follow, and chaunge as the Moone.
Right so fareth Love, that selde in one
Holdeth his anker, for right anone
Whan they in ease wene best to live,
They ben with tempest all fordrive :
Who serveth Love, can tell of wo,
The stoundmele joy mote overgo,
Now he hurteth, and now he cureth,
For selde in o point Love endureth.
Now is it right me to proceed,
How Shame gan meddle and take heed,
Through whom fell angers I have hade,
And how the strong wall was made,
And the castle of brede and length,
That god of love wan with his strength :
All this romance will I set,
And for no thing ne will I let,
So that it liking to her be,
That is the floure of beaute,
For she may best my labour quite,
That I for her love shall endite.
Wicked Tongue, that the covine
Of every lover can devine
Worst, and addeth more somdele
(For wicked tongue saith never wele)
To me ward bare he right great hate,
Espying me early and late,
Till he hath seene the great chere
Of Bialacoil and me yfere :
He might not his tongue withstonde
Worse to reporte than he fonde,
He was so full of cursed rage;
It sat him wele of his linage,
For him an irous woman bare ;
His tongue was filed sharpe and square,
Poignaunt and right kerving,
And wonder bitter in speaking ;
For whan that he me gan espy,
He swore (affirming sikerly)
Betweene Bialacoil and me
Was evill acquaintaunce and prive :
He spake thereof so folilie,
That he awaked Jelousie,
Which all afraied in his rising,
When that he heard jangling,
He ran anon as he were wood
To Bialacoil there that he stood,
Which had lever in this caas
Have ben at Reines or Amias,
For fote hote in his fellonie,
To him thus said Jelousie :
" Why hast thou ben so negligent,
To keepen, whan I was absent,
This verger here left in thy ward ?
To me thou haddest no regard,
To trust (to thy confusion)
Him thus, to whom suspection
I have right great, for it is nede,
It is well shewed by the dede.
Great fault in thee now have I found,
By God anon thou shalt be bound,
And faste locken in a toure,
Without refuite or succoure.

" For Shame too long hath be thee fro,
Oversoone she was ago,

Whan thou hast lost both drede and fere,
It seemed well she was not here,
She was busie in no wise,
To keepe thee and chastise,
And for to helpen Chastite
To keepe the roser, as thinketh me,
For then this boy knave so boldly,
Ne should not have be hardy
In this verge had such game,
Which now me turneth to great shame."

Bialacoil nist what to say,
Full faine he would have fled away,
For feare have hid, nere that he
All suddainly tooke him with me:
And whan I saw he had so,
This Jelousie take us two,
I was astonied, and knew no rede,
But fled away for very drede.
Then Shame came forth full simply,
She wende have trespaced full greatly,
Humble of her port, and made it simple,
Wearing a vaile in stede of wimple,
As nonnes done in hir abbey:
Because her herte was in affray,
She gan to speake within a narow
To Jelousie, right wonder low.
First of his grace she besought,
And said: "Sir, ne leveth nought
Wicked Tongue, that false espie,
Which is so glad to faine and lie,
He hath you made, through flattering,
On Bialacoil a false leasing:
His falsenesse is not now anew,
It is too long that he him knew:
This is not the first daie,
For Wicked Tongue hath custome aie,
Younge folkes to bewrie,
And false lesings on hem lie.
"Yet nevertheless I see among,
That the soigne it is so long
Of Bialacoil, hertes to lure,
In Loves service for to endure,
Drawing suche folke him to,
That he had nothing with to do,
But in soothnesse I trowe nought,
That Bialacoil had ever in thought
To do trespace or villanie,
But for his mother Curtesie
Hath taught him ever to be
Good of acquaintaunce and prive,
For he loveth none heavinesse,
But mirth and play, and all gladnesse;
He hateth all trechous,
Soleine folke and envious:
For ye weten how that he
Woll ever glad and joyfull be
Honestly with folke to play:
I have be negligent in good fay
To chastise him, therefore now I
Of herte I crie you here mercy,
That I have ben so recheles
To tamen him withouten lees,
Of my folly I me repent,
Now woll I hole set mine entent
To keepe both low and still
Bialacoil to do your will."
"Shame, Shame" (said Jelousy)
"To be bitrashed great drede have I.
"Lecherie hath clombe so hie
That almost bleared is mine eie,
No wonder is, if that drede have I,
Over all reigneth Lechery,
Whose might groweth night and day,
Both in cloyster and in abbay,
Chastitie is werried over all,
Therefore I woll with siker wall
Close both roses and rosere,
I have too long in this manere
Left hem unclosed wilfully:
Wherefore I am right inwardly
Sorrowfull, and repent me,
But now they shall no lenger be
Unclosed, and yet I drede sore,
I shall repent ferthermore,
For the game goeth all amis,
Counsaile I must new ywis,
I have too long trusted thee,
But now it shall no lenger bee:
For he may best in every cost
Deceive that men trusten most:
I see well that I am nigh shent,
But if I set my full entent
Remedye to purvay:
Wherefore close I shall the way
From hem that woll the rose espie,
And come to wait me villanie,
For in good faith and in trouth
I woll not let for no slouth
To live the more in sikernesse,
Do make anon a fortresse.
Than close the roses of good savour;
In middes shall I make a tour
To put Bialacoil in prison,
For ever I drede me of treason;
I trow I shall him keepe so,
That he shall have no might to go
About to make compagnie
To hem that thinke of villanie,
Ne to no such as hath ben here
Aforne, and found in him good chere,
Which han assailed him to shend,
And with hir trowandise to blend,
A foole is eith to beguile,
But may I live a little while,
He shall forthinke his faire semblaunt"
And with that word came Drede avaunt,
Which was abashed, and in great fere,
Whan he wist Jelousie was there.
He was for drede in such affray,
That not a worde durst he say,
But quaking stood full still alone
(Till Jelousie his way was gone)
Save Shame, that him not forsoke,
Both Drede and she full sore quoke,
That at last Drede abraide,
And to his cousin Shame saide.
"Shame" (he said) "in soothfastnesse,
To me it is great heavinesse,
That the noise so ferre is go,
And the slaunder of us two:
But sithe that it is befall,
We may it not againe call,
When once sprung is a fame:
For many a yeare withouten blame
We have ben, and many a day,
For many an April and many a May
We han passed, not ashamed,
Till Jelousie hath us blamed
Of mistrust and suspection

Causelesse, without encheson :
Go we to Daunger hastely,
And let us shew him openly,
That he hath not aright wrought,
Whan that he set not his thought
To keepe better the purprise ;
In his doing he is not wise.
He hath to us do great wrong,
That hath suffred now so long
Bialacoil to have his will
All his lustes to fulfill :
He must amend it utterly,
Or els shall he villanously
Exiled be out of this lond :
For he the warre may not withstond
Of Jelousie, nor the greefe,
Sith Bialacoil is at mischeefe."

To Daunger, Shame and Drede anon
The right way ben gon :
The chorle they founde hem aforne
Ligging under an hawthorne.
Under his head no pillow was,
But in the stede a trusse of gras :
He slombred, and a nappe he toke,
Till Shame pitously him shoke,
And great manace on him gan make.
"Why sleepest thou when thou should wake"
(Quod Shame) "thou dost us villanie,
Who trusteth thee, he doth follie,
To keepe roses or bothums
When they be faire in hir seasons :
Thou art woxe too familiere
Where thou should be straunge of chere,
Stout of thy port, ready to greve :
Thou doest great folly for to leve
Bialacoil here in to call
The yonger man to shenden us all :
Though that thou sleepe, we may here,
Of Jelousie great noise here,
Art thou now late, rise up and hye,
And stop soone and deliverlye
All the gaps of the hay ;
Do no favour I thee pray :
It falleth nothing to thy name,
To make fair semblant, were thou mayst blame

"If Bialacoil be sweet and free,
Dogged and fell thou shuldest bee,
Froward and outragious ywis,
A chorle chaungeth that curteis is :
This have I heard oft in saying,
That man may for no daunting
Make a sparhauke of a bosarde :
All men hold thee for musarde,
That debonaire have founden thee,
It sitteth thee nought curteis to bee,
To do men pleasaunce or servise,
In thee it is recreaundise :
Let thy werkes ferre and nere
Be like thy name, which is Daungere."
Then all abashed in shewing,
Anon spake Drede, right thus saying,
And said, "Daunger, I drede me,
That thou ne wolt besie be
To keepe that thou hast to keepe,
When thou shuldest wake, thou art asleepe :
Thou shalt be greeved certainely,
If thee aspie Jelousy,
Or if he finde thee in blame.
He hath to day assailed Shame,
And chased away with great manace
Bialacoil out of this place,
And swcareth shortly that he shall
Enclose him in a sturdy wall ;
And all is for thy wickednesse,
For that thee faileth straungenesse ;
Thine herte I trow be failed all ;
Thou shalt repent in speciall,
If Jelousie the soothe knew,
Thou shalt forthinke, and sore rew."
With that the chorle his clubbe gan shake,
Frouning his eyen gan to make,
And hidous chere, as man in rage,
For ire he brent in his visage :
Whan that he heard him blamed so,
He said, "Out of my witte I go,
To be discomfite I have great wrong,
Certes, I have now lived too long,
Sith I may not this closer keepe,
All quicke I would be dolven deepe,
If any man shall more repaire
Into this garden for foule or faire,
Mine herte for ire gothe afere,
That I let any entre here,
I have doe folly now I see,
But now it shall amended be,
Who setteth foot here any more,
Truly he shall repent it sore,
For no man more into this place
Of me to enter shall have grace,
Lever I had with swerdes twaine,
Throughout mine herte, in every vaine
Perced to be, with many a wound,
Than slouth should in me be found :
From henceforth by night or day,
I shall defend it if I may
Withouten any exception
Of eache manner condition,
And if I it any man graunt,
Holdeth me for recreaunt."

Then Daunger on his feet gan stond,
And hent a burdon in his hond,
Wroth in his ire ne left he nought,
But through the verger he hath sought,
If he might find hole or trace,
Where through that me mote forth by pace,
Or any gappe, he did it close,
That no man might touch a rose
Of the roser all about,
He shetteth every man without.
Thus day by day Daunger is wers,
More wonderfull and more divers,
And feller eke than ever he was,
For him full oft I sing alas,
For I ne may nought through his ire
Recover that I most desire ;
Mine herte alas woll brest atwo,
For Bialacoil I wrathed so :
For certainly in every member
I quake, when I me remember
Of the bothum, which I would
Full oft a day seene and behold,
And when I thinke upon the kisse,
And how muche joy and blisse,
I had through the savour swete,
For want of it I grone and grete :
Me thinketh I fele yet in my nose

The swete savour of the rose,
And now I wote that I mote go
So ferre the fresh floures fro,
To me full welcome were the death,
Absence thereof (alas) me sleeth,
For whylome with this rose, alas,
I touched nose, mouth, and face,
But now the death I must abide ;
But Love consent another tide,
That ones I touch may and kisse,
I trow my paine shall never lisse ;
Thereon is all my covetise,
Which brent my heart in many wise.
Now shall repaire againe sighing,
Long watch on nights, and no sleeping,
Thought in wishing, turment, and wo,
With many a turning to and fro,
That halfe my paine I cannot tell,
For I am fallen into Hell,
From paradise and wealth, the more
My turment greveth more and more,
Annoyeth now the bitternesse,
That I toforne have felt sweetnesse,
And Wicked Tongue, through his falshede,
Causeth all my wo and drede,
On me he lieth a pitous charge,
Because his tongue was too large.
Now it is time shortly that I
Tell you something of Jelousie,
That was in great suspection :
About him left he no mason,
That stone could lay, ne querrour,
He hired hem to make a tour :
And first the roses for to keepe,
About hem made he a ditch deepe,
Right wonder large, and also brode,
Upon the whiche also stode
Of squared stone a sturdy wall,
Which on a cragge was founded all,
And right great thicknesse eke it bare,
About it was founded square
An hundred fadome on every side,
It was all liche long and wide,
Least any time it were assailed,
Full well about it was battailed,
And round environ eke were set
Full many a rich and faire tournet,
At every corner of this wall
Was set a tour full principall,
And everiche had without fable
A portcullise defensable
To keepe off enemies, and to greve,
That there hir force would preve.
And eke amidde this purprise
Was made a tour of great maistrise,
A fairer saugh no man with sight,
Large and wide, and of great might,
They dradde none assaut,
Of ginne, gonne, nor skaffaut,
The temprure of the mortere
Was made of liquor wonder dere,
Of quicke lime persaunt and egre,
The which was tempred with vinegre.
The stone was hard of adamaunt,
Whereof they made the foundemaunt,
The toure was round made in compas,
In all this world no richer was,
Ne better ordained therewithall,
About the tour was made a wall,
So that betwixt that and the tour,
Roses were set of sweet savour,
With many roses that they bere,
And eke within the castle were
Springolds, gonnes, bowes, and archers,
And eke about at corners
Men seine over the wall stond
Great engines, who were nere hond,
And in the kernels here and there,
Of arblasters great plentie were.
None armour might hir stroke withstond,
It were folly to prease to hond ;
Without the diche were listes made,
With wall battailed large and brade,
For men and horse should not attaine
Too nigh the diche over the plaine.
Thus Jelousie hath environ
Sette about his garnison
With walles round, and diche deepe,
Onely the roser for to keepe,
And Daunger early and late
The keyes kept of the utter gate,
The which opened toward the east,
And he had with him at least
Thirtie servants echone by name.
That other gate kept Shame,
Which opened, as it was couth,
Toward the parte of the south,
Sergeaunts assigned were her to
Full many, her will for to do.
Than Drede had in her baillie
The keeping of the constablerie,
Toward the north I understond,
That opened upon the left hond,
The which for nothing may be sure,
But if she doe busie cure
Early on morrow and also late,
Strongly to shette and barre the gate :
Of every thing that she may see,
Drede is aferde, where so she bee,
For with a puffe of little wind,
Drede is astonied in her mind,
Therefore for stealing of the rose,
I rede her nat the yate unclose,
A foules flight would make her flee,
And eke a shaddow if she it see.

THAN Wicked Tongue full of envie,
With souldiours of Normandie,
As he that causeth all debate,
Was keeper of the fourth gate,
And also to the tother three,
He went full ofte for to see.
When his lotte was to walke a night,
His instrumentes would he dight,
For to blowe and make soune,
Ofter than he hath enchesoune,
And walken oft upon the wall,
Corners and wickettes over all,
Full narrow searchen and espie ;
Though he nought fond, yet would he lie
Discordaunt ever fro armonie,
And dissoned from melodie,
Controve he would, and foule faile,
With hornepipes of Cornewaile.
In floytes made he discordaunce,
And in his musicke with mischaunce,
He would seine with notes newe,
That he fond no woman trew,
Ne that he saw never in his life,
Unto her husbond a trew wife :

Ne none so full of honeste,
That she nill laugh and merry be,
Whan that she heareth or may espie
A man speaken of lecherie.
Everiche of hem hath some vice,
One is dishonest, another is nice,
If one be full of villanie,
Another with a licorous eie,
If one be full of wantonnesse,
Another is a chideresse.
Thus Wicked tong, God yeve him shame,
Can put hem everichone in blame,
Without desert and causelesse,
He lieth, though they ben guiltlesse;
I have pity to seene the sorrow,
That waketh both even and morrow,
To innocents doth such grevaunce,
I pray God yeve him evill chaunce,
That he ever so busie is,
Of any woman to seine amis.
Eke Jelousie God confound,
That hath made a toure so round,
And made about a garison,
To sette Bialacoil in prison,
The which is shette there in the tour,
Full long to holde there sojour,
There for live in pennaunce,
And for to do him more grevaunce,
Which hath ordained Jelousie,
An olde vecke for to spie
The manner of his governaunce,
The which devill in her enfaunce
Had learned of Loves art,
And of his plays tooke her part,
She was expert in his servise,
She knew each wrenche and every gise
Of love, and every wile,
It was hard her to beguile.
Of Bialacoil she tooke aye hede,
That ever he liveth in wo and drede,
He kept him coy and eke privee,
Least in him she hadde see
Any folly countenance,
For she knew all the old daunce.
And after this, whan Jelousie
Had Bialacoil in his baillie,
And shette him up that was so free,
For sure of him he would bee,
He trusteth sore in his castell,
The strong werke him liketh well,
He dradde nat that no glotons
Should steale his roses or bothoms,
The roses weren assured all
Defenced with the strong wall,
Now Jelousie full well may be
Of drede devoid in liberte,
Whether that he sleepe or wake,
For of his roses may none be take.

But I (alas) now mourne shall,
Because I was without the wall,
Full muche dole and mone I made,
Who had wist what wo I hade,
I trow he would have had pite,
Love too deare had solde me
The good that of his love had I,
I went about it all queintly,
But now through doubling of my paine
I see he woll it sell againe,
And me a new bargaine lere,
The which all out the more is dere,
For the sollace that I have lorne,
Than I had it never aforne;
Certaine I am full like indeed
To him that cast in earth his seed,
And hath joy of the new springing,
Whan it greeneth in the ginning,
And is also faire and fresh of flour,
Lustie to seene, swote of odour,
But ere he it in his sheves shere,
May fall a weather that shall it dere,
And make it to fade and fall,
The stalke, the greine, and floures ail,
That to the tiller is fordone,
The hope that he had too soone:
I drede certaine that so fare I,
For hope and travaile sikerly
Ben me beraft all with a storme,
The floure nill seden of my corne,
For Love hath so avaunced me,
When I began my privite,
To Bialacoil all for to tell,
Whom I ne found froward ne fell,
But tooke agree all whole my play;
But Love is of so hard assay,
That all at ones he reved me,
Whan I weent best aboven to have be.
It is of Love, as of Fortune,
That chaungeth oft, and nill contune,
Which whylome woll of folke smile,
And glombe on hem another while,
Now friend, now foe, shalt her feele,
For a twinckling tourneth her wheele.
She can writhe her head away,
This is the concourse of her play,
She can areise that doeth mourne,
And whirle adoune, and overtourne
Who sitteth highest, but as her lust,
A foole is he that woll her trust,
For it is I that am come doun
Through charge and revolutioun,
Sith Bialacoil mote fro me twin,
Shette in her prison yonde within,
His absence at mine herte I fele,
For all my joy and all mine hele
Was in him and in the rose,
That but you will, which him doeth close,
Open, that I may him see,
Love woll not that I cured bee
Of the paines that I endure,
Nor of my cruell aventure.

Ah, Bialacoil mine owne dere,
Though thou be now a prisonere,
Keepe at least thine herte to me,
And suffer nat that it daunted be,
Ne let not Jealousie in his rage,
Putten thine heart in no servage,
Although he chastice thee without,
And make thy bodie unto him lout,
Have herte as hard as Diamaunt,
Stedfast, and naught pliaunt:
In prison though thy bodie bee
At large keepe thine herte free,
A true herte will not plie
For no manace that it may drie.
If Jelousie doeth thee paine,
Quite him his wile thus againe,
To venge thee at least in thought,
If other way thou maiest nought,

And in this wise subtelly
Worch, and winne the maistrie.
But yet I am in great affray,
Least thou doe nat as I say,
I drede thou canst me great maugre,
That thou emprisoned art for me,
But that nat for my trespas,
For through me never discovered was
Yet thing that ought be secre :
Well more annoie is in me,
Than is in thee of this mischaunce,
For I endure more hard penaunce
Than any can saine or thinke,
That for the sorrow almost I sinke,
Whan I remember me of my wo,
Full nigh out of my witte I go.
Inward mine herte I feele blede,
For comfortlesse the death I drede,
Owe I nat well to have distresse,
Whan false, through hir wickednesse,
And traitours, that arn envious,
To noien me be so coragious.
Ah, Bialacoil full well I see,
That they hem shape to deceive thee,
To make thee buxom to hir law,
And with hir corde thee to draw
Where so hem lust, right at hir will,
I drede they have thee brought theretill :
Without comfort, the thought me sleeth,
This game would bring me to my death,
For if your good will I lese,
I mote be dead, I may not chese,
And if that thou forycte me,
Mine herte shall never in liking be,
Nor elswhere find sollace,
If I be put out of your grace,
As it shall never ben I hope,
Than should I fall in wanhope.
Alas, in wanhope, nay parde,
For I woll never dispaired be ;
If Hope me faile, than am I
Ungracious and unworthy ;
In Hope I woll comforted be,
For Love, when he betaught her me,
Saied, that Hope where so I go,
Should aye be relees to my wo.
But what and she my bales bete,
And be to me curteis and swete ?
She is in nothing full certaine,
Lovers she put in full great paine,
And maketh hem with wo to dele,
Her faire beheste deceiveth fele,
For she woll behote sikerly,
And failen after utterly.
Ah, that is a full noyous thing,
For many a lover in loving
Hangeth upon her, and trusteth fast,
Which lese hir travaile at the last.
Of thing to commen she wot right nought,
Therefore if it be wisely sought,
Her counsaile follie is to take,
For many times, when she woll make
A full good sillogisme, I drede,
That afterward there shall indede
Follow an evill conclusion,
This put me in confusion.
For many times I have it seene,
That many have beguiled beene,
For trust that they have set in hope,
Which fell hem afterward a slope.
But nathelesse yet gladly she would,
That he that woll him with her hold,
Had all times her purpose clere,
Without deceit any where,
That she desireth sikerly ;
Whan I her blamed, I did folly ;
But what availeth her good will,
Whan she ne may staunch my stound ill,
That helpeth little that she may do,
Or take behest unto my wo :
And heste certaine in no wise,
Without yfete is not to preise.
When heste and deed asunder vary,
They doen a great contrary ;
Thus am I posted up and doun
With dole, thought, and confusioun,
Of my desease there is no number,
Daunger and Shame me encumber,
Drede also, and Jelousie,
And Wicked Tongue full of envie,
Of which the sharpe and cruell ire
Full oft me put in great mattire ;
They have my joie fully let,
Sith Bialacoil they have beshet
Fro me in prison wickedly,
Whom I love so entierly,
That it woll my bane bee,
But I the sooner may him see.
And yet moreover worst of all,
There is set to keepe, foule her befall,
A rimpled vecke ferre ronne in rage,
Frouning and yellow in her visage,
Which in await lieth day and night,
That none of him may have a sight.

Now mote my sorrow enforced be,
Full sooth it is, that Love yafe me
Three wonder yeftes of his grace,
Which I have lorne, now in this place,
Sith they ne maie without drede
Helpen but little, who taketh hede :
For her availeth no Sweet Thought,
And Sweet Speech helpeth right nought,
The third was called Sweet Looking,
That now is lorne without lesing.
Yeftes were faire, but nat for thy
They helpe me but simply,
But Bialacoil loosed bee
To gone at large and to be free,
For him my life lieth all in dout,
But if he come the rather out.
Alas, I trow it woll nat beene,
For how should I evermore him seene ?
He may nat out, and that is wrong,
Because the toure is so strong,
How should he out, or by whose prowesse
Of so strong a forteresse ?
By me certaine it nill be do,
God wote I have no wit thereto,
But well I wote I was in rage,
When I to Love did homage ;
Who was the cause (in soothfastnesse)
But her selfe dame Idlenesse ?
Which me conveide through faire praiere
To enter into that faire vergere :
She was to blame me to leve,
The which now doeth me sore greve,
A fooles word is nought to trow,
Ne worth an apple for to low,
Men should hem snibbe bitterly,

At prime temps of his folly :
I was a foole, and she me leved,
Through whom I am right nought releved,
She accomplished all my will,
That now me greveth wonder ill.

Reason me saied what should fall,
A foole my selfe I may well call,
That love aside I had not laied,
And trowed that dame Reason saied.
Reason had both skill and right,
When she me blamed with all her might
To meddle of love, that hath me shent,
But certaine now I woll repent.

And should I repent ? Nay parde,
A false traitour then should I be,
The devils engins would me take,
If I Love would forsake,
Or Bialacoil falsly betray.
Should I at mischeefe hate him ? nay,
Sith he now for his courtesie
Is in prison of Jelousie ;
Courtesie certaine did he me,
So much, that it may not yolden be,
When he the haie passen me lete,
To kisse the rose, faire and swete,
Should I therefore conne him maugre ?
Nay certainely, it shall nat be,
For Love shall never (yeve God will)
Here of me, through word or will,
Offence or complaint more or lesse,
Neither of Hope nor Idlenesse :
For certes, it were wrong that I
Hated hem for hir courtesie.
There is not els, but suffer and thinke,
And waken whan I should winke,
Abide in hope, till Love through chaunce
Send me succour or allegeaunce,
Expectaunt aye till I may mete,
To getten mercie of that swete.
Whilome I thinke how Love to mee
Saied he would take at gree
My service, if unpatience
Caused me to doen offence :
He saied, "In thanke I shall it take,
And high maister eke thee make,
If wickednesse ne reve it thee,
But soone I trow that shall nat bee."
These were his wordes by and by,
It seemed he loved me truely.
Now is there not but serve him wele,
If that I thinke his thanke to fele,
My good, mine harme, lithe hole in me,
In Love may no defaut be,
For true Love ne failed never man :
Soothly the faute mote needs than
As God forbide, be found in me,
And how it commeth, I cannot see.
Now let it gone as it may go,
Whether Love woll succour me or slo,
He may do hole on me his will,
I am so sore bound him till,
From his service I may not flene,
For life and death withouten wene
Is in his hond, I may nat chese,
He may me doe both winne and lese,
And sith so sore he doth me greve,
Yet if my lust he would acheve,
To Bialacoil goodly to be,
I yeve no force what fell on me :
For though I die, as I mote nede,
I pray Love of his goodlyhede,
To Bialacoil doo gentlenesse,
For whom I live in such distresse,
That I mote dien for penaunce,
But first, without repentaunce,
I woll me confesse in good entent,
And make in hast my testament,
As lovers doen that feelen smart :
To Bialacoil leave I mine herte
All hole, without departing,
Or doublenesse of repenting.

COMENT RAISON VIENT A L'AMANT.

Thus as I made my passage
In complaint, and in cruell rage,
And I not where to finde a leche,
That couth unto mine helping eche,
Suddainely againe comen doun
Out of her toure I saw Reasoun,
Discreet and wise, and full pleasaunt,
And of her port full avenaunt ;
The right waie she tooke to me,
Which stood in gret perplexite
That was poshed in every side,
That I n'ist where I might abide,
Till she demurely sad of chere
Saied to me as she came nere.
"Mine owne friend, art thou greved,
How is this quarrell yet atcheved
Of Loves side ? Anone me tell,
Hast thou not yet of love thy fill ?
Art thou nat wearie of thy service
That thee hath in suche wise ?
"What joy hast thou in thy loving ?
Is it sweet or bitter thing ?
Canst thou yet chese, let me see,
What best thy succour might bee ?
"Thou servest a full noble lord,
That maketh thee thrall for thy reward,
Which aye reneweth thy tourment,
With folly so he hath thee blent ;
Thou fell in mischeefe thilke day,
When thou diddest the sooth to say
Obeisaunce and eke homage
Thou wroughtest nothing as the sage ;
When thou became his liege man,
Thou diddest a great follie than ;
Thou wistest nat what fell thereto,
With what lord thou haddest to do,
If thou haddest him well know
Thou haddest nought be brought so low,
For if thou wiste what it were,
Thou n'oldest serve him halfe a yere,
Nat a weeke, nor halfe a day,
Ne yet an houre without delay :
Ne never yloved paramours,
His lordship is so full of shours :
Knowest him ought ?"
L'amaunt. "Ye, dame, parde."
Raisoun. "Nay, nay." L'amaunt. "Yes I."
Raisoun. "Wherefore let see."
L'amaunt. "Of that he saied I should be
Glad to have such lord as he
And maister of such seignorie."
Raisoun. "Knowest him no more ?"
L'amaunt. "Nay, certes, I,
Save that he yafe me rules there,
And went his way I nist where,

And I abode bound in ballaunce,
Lo there a noble cognisaunce."

RAISOUN.

"But I woll that thou know him now
Ginning and end, sithe that thou
Art so anguishous and mate,
Disfigured out of astate,
There may no wreche have more of wo,
Ne caitife none enduren so,
It were to every man sitting,
Of his lord have knowledging:
For if thou knew him out of dout,
Lightly thou shouldest scapen out
Of thy prison that marreth thee."

L'AMAUNT.

"Yea dame sith my lord is hee,
And I his man made with mine hond,
I would right faine understond
To knowe of what kind he be,
If any would enforme me."

RAISOUN.

"I would" (saied Reason) "thee lere,
Sith thou to learne hast such desire,
And shewe thee withouten fable
A thing that is not demonstrable;
Thou shalt withouten science,
And know withouten experience
The thing that may not knowen bee,
Ne wist ne sheweth in no degree,
Thou maiest the sooth of it not witten,
Though in thee it were written,
Thou shalt not knowe thereof more,
While thou art ruled by his lore,
But unto him that love woll flie,
The knotte may unlosed be,
Which hath to thee, as it is found,
So long to knitte and not unbound,
Now set well thine entention,
To heare of love the description.

"Love it is an hatefull pees,
A free acquitaunce without relees,
And through the fret full of falshede,
A sikernesse all set in drede,
In herte is a despairing hope,
And full of hope it is wanhope,
Wise woodnesse, and void reasoun,
A swete perill in to droun,
An heavie burthen light to beare,
A wicked wawe away to weare.
It is Carybdis perillous,
Disagreeable and gracious,
It is discordaunce that can accord,
And accordaunce to discord,
It is conning without science,
Wisedome without sapience,
Witte without discretion,
Havoire without possession;
It is like heale and hole sickenesse,
A trust drowned and dronkennesse,
And health full of maladie,
And charitie full of envie,
And anger full of aboundaunce,
And a greedie suffisaunce,
Delight right full of heavinesse,
And dreried full of gladnesse,
Bitter sweetnesse and sweet errour,
Right evill savoured good savour,
Sin that pardon hath within,
And pardon spotted without sin,
A paine also it is joyous,
And fellonie right pitous,
Also play that selde is stable,
And stedfast right mevable,
A strength weiked to stond upright,
And feeblenesse full of might,
Witte unavised, sage follie,
And joy full of tourmentrie,
A laughter it is weeping aie,
Rest that travaileth night and daie,
Also a sweete Hell it is,
And a sorrowfull Paradis,
A pleasaunt gaile and easie prisoun,
And full of froste summer seasoun,
Prime temps full of frostes white,
And May devoid of all delite,
With seer braunches, blossoms ungrene,
And new fruit filled with winter tene,
It is a slowe may nat forbeare,
Ragges ribaned with gold to weare,
For also well woll love be sette
Under ragges as rich rochette,
And eke as well by amorettes
In mourning blacke, as bright burnettes,
For none is of so mokell prise,
Ne no man founden so wise,
Ne none so high of parage,
Ne no man found of witte so sage,
No man so hardie ne so wight,
Ne no man of so mokell might,
None so fulfilled of bounte,
That he with love may daunted be;
All the worlde holdeth this way,
Love maketh all to gone misway,
But it be they of evill life,
Whom genius cursed man and wife,
That wrongly werke againe nature,
None such I love, ne have no cure
Of such as loves servaunts beene,
And woll nat by my counsaile fleene,
For I ne preise that loving,
Wherthrough man at the last ending
Shall call hem wretches full of wo,
Love greveth hem and shendeth so;
But if thou wolt well love eschew,
For to escape out of his mew,
And make all whole the sorrow to slake,
No better counsaile maiest thou take,
Than thinke to fleen well ywis,
May nought helpe els: for wite thou this,
If thou flye it, it shall flye thee,
Follow it, and followen shall it thee."

L'AMAUNT.

When I had heard Reason sain,
Whiche had spilt her speech in vain:
"Dame" (sayd I) "I dare well say
Of this avaunt me well I may
That from your schoole so deviaunt
I am, that never the more avaunt
Right nought am I through your doctrine,
I dull under your discipline,
I wote no more than wist ever
To me so contrarie and so fer
Is everie thing that ye me lere,
And yet I can it all by parcuere:

Mine herte foryeteth thereof right nought,
It is so writen in my thought,
And deepe graven it is so tender
That all by herte I can it render,
And rede it over communely,
But to my selfe lewdest am I.

" But sith ye love discriven so
And lacke and preise it bothe two
Defineth it into this letter,
That I may thinke on it the better:
For I heard never defined here,
And wilfully I would it lere."

RAISOUN.

" If love be searched well and sought
It is a sickenesse of the thought
Annexed and knedde betwixt tweine,
With male and female with o cheine,
So freely that bindeth, yet they n'ill twinne,
Wheder so thereof they lese or winne:
The roote springeth through hot brenning
Into disordinate desiring,
For to kissen and embrace,
And at hir lust them to solace,
Of other thing love retcheth nought
But setteth hir herte and all hir thought,
More for delectatioun
Than any procreatioun
Of other fruit by engendrure:
Which love, to God is not pleasure,
For of hir body fruit to get
They yeve no force, they are so set
Upon delight to play in fere.
And some have also this manere,
To fainen hem for love seke,
Such love I preise not at a leke.
For paramours they doe but faine,
To love truely they disdaine,
They falsen ladies traitorously,
And swerne hem othes utterly,
With many a leasing, and many a fable,
And all the finden deceivable.
" And when they han hir lust getten
The hote ernes they all foryetten;
Women the harme buyen full sore:
But men thus thinken evermore,
The lasse harme is, so mote I thee,
Deceive them, than deceived be.
And namely where they ne may
Finde none other meane way:
For I wote well in soothfastnesse,
That who doeth now his businesse
With any woman for to dele,
For any lust that he may fele,
But if it be for engendrure,
He doth trespasse I you ensure:
For he should setten all his will
To getten a likely thing him till,
And to sustaine, if he might,
And keepe forth by Kindes right
His owne likenesse and semblable:
For because all is corrumpable
And faile should succession
Ne were there generation,
Our sectes sterne for to save,
Whan father or mother arn in grave,
Her children should, whan they been dead,
Full diligent been in hir stead
To use that worke on such a wise,
That one may through another rise.
Therefore set Kinde therein delight,
For men therein should hem delight,
And of that deede be not erke,
But ofte sithes haunt that werke:
For none would draw thereof a draught
Ne were delight, which hath hem caught,
This had subtill dame Nature:
For none goeth right I thee ensure
Ne hath entent hoole ne perfite,
For hir desire is for delite,
The which fortened crease and eke
The play of love, for oft seeke
And thrall hem selfe they be so nice
Unto the prince of everie vice:
For of each sinne it is the roote
Unlefull lust, though it be soote,
And of all evill the racine,
As Tullius can determine,
Which in his time was full sage,
In a booke he made of age,
Where that more he praiseth Elde
Though he be crooked and unwelde,
And more of commendatioun,
Than youth in his discriptioun:
For youth set bothe man and wife
In all perill of soule and life,
And perill is, but men have grace.
The perill of youth for to pace,
Without any death or distresse,
It is so full of wildnesse,
So oft it doeth shame and domage
To him or to his linage,
It leadeth man, now up now doun
In mokell dissolutioun,
And maketh him love evill companie,
And lead his life disrulilie,
And halt him payd with none estate
Within himselfe in such debate,
He chaungeth purpose and entent,
And yalte into some covent,
To liven after hir emprise,
And leeseth freedome and fraunchise,
That nature in him had set,
The which againe he may not get,
If he there make his mansion,
For to abide profession.
Though for a time his herte absent
It may not faile, he shall repent,
And eke abide thilke day,
To leave his abite, and gone his way,
And leaseth his worship and his name,
And dare not come againe for shame,
But all his life he doth so mourne,
Because he dare not home retourne,
Freedome of kinde so lost hath he
That never may recured be,
But that if God him graunt grace
That he may, er he hence pace,
Conteine under obedience
Through the vertue of patience.
For youth set man in all follie,
In unthrift and in ribaudrie,
In lecherie, and in outrage,
So oft it chaungeth of courage.
Youth ginneth oft suche bargaine,
That may not ende without paine.
In great perill is set youthhede
Delight so doeth his bridell lede,
Delight this hangeth, drede thee nought,

Both mannes bodie and his thought,
Onely through youthes chambere,
That to doen evill is customere,
And of naught else taketh hede,
But onely folkes for to lede
Into disport and wildenesse,
So is froward from sadnesse,
But elde draweth hem therefro,
Who wote it not, he may well go,
And mo of them, that now arn old,
That whilom youth had in hold,
Which yet remembreth of tender age
How it him brought in many a rage,
And many a follie therein wrought:
But now that elde hath him through sought
They repent hem of hir follie,
That youth hem put in jeopardie,
In perill and in muche woe,
And made hem oft amisse to doe,
And sewen evill companie
Riot and advoutrie.

"But elde gan againe restraine
From such follie, and refraine
And set men by her ordinaunce,
In good rule and governaunce,
But evil she spendeth her servise,
For no man woll her love, neither preise,
She is hated, this wote I wele,
Her acquaintance would no man fele,
Ne han of elde companie,
Men hate to be of her alie,
For no man would becommen old,
Ne die, when he is young and bold,
And elde marvaileth right greatly,
When they remember hem inwardly
Of many a perillous emprise
Which that they wrought in sundry wise,
However they might without blame
Escape awaie without shame,
In youth without domage
Or reprefe of her linage,
Losse of member, shedding of blood,
Perill of death, or losse of good.
Wost thou nat where youth abit,
That men so preisen in hir wit?
With Delight she halt sojour,
For both they dwellen in o tour,
As long as youth is in season,
They dwellen in one mansion:
Delight, of youth woll have servise
To doe what so he woll devise,
And youth is readie evermore
For to obey, for smert or sore,
Unto Delight, and him o yeve
Her servise, while that she may live.
"Where elde abitte, I woll thee tell
Shortly, and no while dwell,
For thider behoveth thee to go
If death in youth thee not slo:
Of this journey thou mayst not faile,
With her Labour and Travaile,
Lodged been with Sorrow and Wo,
That never out of her court go:
Paine and Distresse, Sickenesse, and Ire,
And Melancholly that angrie sire,
Ben of her paleis senatours,
Groning and grutching, her herbegeours,
The day and night her to tourment
With cruell death they her present,
And tellen her erlich and late
That Death stondeth armed at her gate:
Than bring they to her remembraunce
The folly deedes of her enfaunce,
Which causen her to mourne in wo
That youth hath her beguiled so
Which sodainly away is hasted,
She weeped the time that she hath wasted,
Complaining of the preteritte,
And the present, that nat abitte,
And of her olde vanitee
That but aforne her she may see,
In the future some succour,
To leggen her of her dolour
To graunt her time of repentaunce,
For her sinnes to doe penaunce,
And at the last so her governe
To winne the joy that is eterne,
Fro which goe backeward youth he made
In vanitie to drowne and wade,
For present time abideth nought,
It is more swift than any thought,
So little while it doth endure
That there n'is compte ne measure.
"But how that ever the game go
Who list to love joy and mirth also
Of love, be it he or she,
Hie or lowe who it be,
In fruite they should hem delite,
Hir part they may not else quite,
To save hem selfe in honeste,
And yet full many one I see
Of women, soothly for to saine,
That desire and would faine
The play of love, they be so wilde
And not covet to go with childe:
And if with childe they be perchaunce,
They woll it hold a great mischaunce,
But whatsoever woe they fele,
They woll not plaine, but conceie,
But if it be any foole or nice,
In whome that shame hath no justice,
For to delight each one they draw,
That haunt this worke both hie and law,
Save such that arn worth right nought,
That for money woll be bought,
Such love I preise in no wise,
Whan it is given for covetise;
I praise no woman, though she be wood
That yeveth her selfe for any good
For little should a manne tell
Of her, that will her bodie sell,
Be she maide, be she wife,
That quicke woll sell her by her life,
How faire chere that ever she make,
He is a wretch I undertake
That loved such one, for sweete or soure,
Though she him called her paramoure,
And laugheth on him, and maketh him feast,
For certainly no suche beast
To be loved is not worthie
Or beare the name of Druerie,
None should her please, but he wer wood,
That woll dispoile him of his good:
Yet nathelesse I woll not say
That she for solace and for play,
May a jewell or other thing
Take of her loves free yeving:
But that she aske it in no wise,
For drede of shame or covetise.

And she of hers may him certaine
Without slaunder yeven againe,
And joyne hir hearts togither so
In love, and take and yeve also.
Trow not that I woll hem twinne,
When in hir love there is no sinne,
I woll that they together go,
And done all that they han ado,
As curtes should and debonaire,
And in hir love beren hem faire,
Without vice, both he and she,
So that alway in honeste,
Fro folly Love to keepe hem clere
That brenneth hertes with his fere,
And that hir love in any wise,
Be devoide of covetise.
Good love should engendred be
Of true herte, just, and secree,
And not of such as set hir thought
To have hir lust, and else nought:
So are they caught in Loves lace,
Truly for bodily solace,
Fleshly delighte is so present
With thee, that set all thine entent,
Without more, what should I glose,
For to get and have the rose,
Which maketh thee so mate and wood
That thou desirest none other good;
But thou art not an inch the nerre,
But ever abidest in sorrow and werre,
As in thy face it is seene,
It maketh thee both pale and leene,
Thy might, thy vertue goeth away:
A sorry guest (in good fay)
Thou harbourest in thine inne
The god of love whan thou let inne:
Wherefore I read thou shette him out,
Or he shall greve thee out of dout,
For to thy profite it woll tourne,
If he no more with thee sojourne.
In great mischiefe and sorrow sonken,
Ben hertes, that of love arn dronken,
As thou peraventure knowen shall,
When thou hast lost the time all,
And spent thy thought in idlenesse,
In waste, and wofull lustinesse:
If thou maiest live the time to see
Of love for to delivered bee,
Thy time thou shalt beweepe sore
The which never thou mayest restore:
For time lost, as men may see,
For nothing may recovered bee,
And if thou scape, yet at last,
Fro Love that hath thee so fast
Knitte and bounden in his lace,
Certaine I hold it but a grace,
For many one as it is seine
Have lost, and spent also in veine
In his servise without succour
Bodie and soule, good, and treasour,
Wit, and strength, and eke richesse,
Of which they had never redresse."

L'AMANT.

THUS taught and preached hath Reason,
But Love spilte her sermon,
That was so imped in my thought,
That her doctrine I set at nought,
And yet ne sayd she never a dele,
That I ne understood it wele,
Word by word the matter all,
But unto Love I was so thrall,
Which calleth over all his praie,
He chaseth so my thought aie,
And holdeth mine herte under his sele,
As trustie and true as any stele:
So that no devotion
Ne had I in the sermon
Of dame Reason, ne of her rede
I tooke no sojour in mine hede.
For all yede out at one ere
That in that other she did lere,
Fully on me she lost her lore
Her speech me greeved wonder sore.

THAT unto her for ire I said
For anger, as I did abraid:
"Dame, and is it your will algate,
That I not love, but that I hate
All men, as ye me teach,
For if I doe after your speach,
Sith that you seine love is not good,
Than must I nedes say with mood
If I it leve, in hatred aie
Liven, and voide love awaie,
From me a sinfull wretch,
Hated of all that tetch,
I may not go none other gate,
For either must I love or hate,
And if I hate men of new,
More than love it woll me rew,
As by your preching seemeth mee,
For love nothing ne praiseth thee:
Ye yeve good counsaile sikerly
That precheth me all day, that I
Should not loves lore alowe,
He were a foole woulde you not trowe!
In speech also ye han me taught,
Another love that knowne is naught
Which I have heard you not reprove,
To love each other by your leve,
If ye would diffine it mee,
I would gladly here to see,
At the least if I may lere
Of sundrie loves the manere."

RAISON.

"CERTES friend, a foole art thou
Whan that thou nothing wilt allow
That I for thy profite say:
Yet woll I say thee more in fay,
For I am readie at the leest,
To accomplish thy request,
But I not where it woll availe,
In vaine peraventure I shall travaile:
Love there is in sundrie wise,
As I shall thee here devise.
"For some love lefull is and good,
I meane not that which maketh thee wood,
And bringeth thee in many a fitte,
And ravisheth fro thee all thy witte,
It is so marvailous and queint,
With such love be no more aquaint.

COMMENT RAISON DIFFINIST AMITIÉ.

"LOVE of friendship also there is
Which maketh no man done amis,
Of will knitte betwixt two,
That woll not breake for wele ne wo.

Which long is likely to contune,
Whan will and goods been in commune,
Grounded by Gods ordinaunce,
Hoole without discordaunce,
With hem holding commaunce
Of all her good in charite,
That there be none exceptioun,
Through chaunging of ententioun,
That each helpe other at her nede,
And wisely hele both word and dede,
True of meaning, devoide of slouth,
For wit is nought without trouth:
So that the tone dare all his thought
Saine to his friend, and spare nought,
As to himselfe without dreding,
To be discovered by wreiyng,
For glad is that conjunction,
Whan there is none suspection,
Whom they would prove
That true and perfite weren in love:
For no man may be amiable,
But if he be so firme and stable,
That fortune change him not ne blinde,
But that his friend alway him finde,
Both poore and riche in o state:
For if his friend through any gate,
Woll complaine of his poverte,
He should not bide so long, till he
Of his helping him require,
For good deed done through praiere
Is sold and bought too deere ywis
To herte that of great valour is.
For herte fulfilled of gentlenesse,
Can evill demeane his distresse.
And man that worthy is of name,
To asken often hath great shame.
" A good man brenneth in his thought,
For shame when he asketh ought,
He hath great thought, and dredeth aie
For his disease when he shall praie
His friend, least that he warned be
Till that he preve his stabilitie:
But when that he hath founden one
That trustie is and true as stone,
And assayed him at all,
And found him stedfast as a wall,
And of his friendship be certaine,
He shall him shew both joy and paine,
And all that he dare thinke or say,
Without shame, as he well may,
For how should he ashamed be,
Of such one as I told thee?
For whan he wote his secret thought,
The third shall know thereof right nought,
For twey in number is bet than three,
In everie counsaile and secree:
Repreve he dredeth never a dele,
Who that beset his wordes wele,
For everie wise man out of drede,
Can keepe his tongue till he see nede.
" And fooles cannot hold hir tongue,
A fooles bell is soone ronge,
Yet shall a true friend doe more
To helpe his fellow of his sore,
And succour him whan he hath need
In all that he may done indeed,
And gladder that he him pleaseth
Than his felowe that he easeth,
And if he doe not his request,
He shall as muche him molest
As his felowe, for that he
May not fulfill his volunte
Fully, as he hath required;
If both the hertes love hath fired
Joy and woe they shall depart,
And take evenly each his part,
Halfe his annoy he shall have aie,
And comforte what that he may,
And of this blisse part shall he,
If love woll departed be.

" And whilom of this unitie
Spake Tullius in a ditie,
And should maken his request
Unto his friend, that is honest,
And he goodly should it fulfill,
But it the more were out of skill,
And otherwise not graunt thereto,
Except onely in causes two.
" If men his friend to death would drive
Let him be busie to save his live.
" Also if men wollen hem assaile,
Of his worship to make him faile
And hindren him of his renoun,
Let him with full ententioun,
His dever done in each degree
That his friend ne shamed be.
" In this two case with his might,
Taking no keepe to skill nor right,
As farre as love may him excuse,
This ought no manne to refuse.
" This love that I have told to thee
Is nothing contrarie to mee,
This woll I that thou follow wele,
And leave the other everie dele,
This love to vertue all attendeth,
The tother fooles blent and shendeth.
" Another love also there is,
That is contrarie unto this,
Which desire is so constrained
That is but will fained;
Away fro trouth it doth so varie
That to good love it is contrarie;
For it maymeth in many wise
Sicke hertes with covetise;
All in winning and in profite,
Such love setteth his delite:
This love so hangeth in balaunce
That if it lese his hope perchaunce,
Of lucre, that he is set upon,
It woll faile, and quench anon,
For no man may be amorous,
Ne in his living vertuous,
But he love more in mood
Men for hem selfe than for hir good;
For love that profite doth abide,
Is false, and hideth not in no tide.
Love commeth of dame Fortune,
That little while woll contune,
For it shall chaungen wonders soone
And take eclips as the Moone
Whan she is from us let
Through Earth, that betwixt is set
The Sunne and her, as it may fall,
Be it in partie, or in all;
The shadow maketh her beames merke
And her hornes to shew derke,
That part where she hath lost her light
Of Phebus fully, and the sight,
Till whan the shadow is overpast,

She is enlumined againe as fast,
Through the brightnesse of the sun beames
That yeveth to her againe her leames:
That love is right of such nature,
Now is faire, and now obscure,
Now bright, now clipsy of manere,
And whilom dimme, and whilom clere,
Assoone as poverte ginneth take,
With mantell and weedes blake
Hideth of love the light away,
That into night it tourneth day,
It may not see richesse shine,
Till the blacke shadowes fine,
For whan richesse shineth bright
Love recovereth ayen his light,
And whan it faileth, he woll flit,
And as she greeveth, so greeveth it.
"Of this love heare what I saie:
The riche men are loved aie,
And namely tho that sparand beene,
That woll not wash hir hertes cleene
Of the filth, nor of the vice
Of greedy brenning avarice.
"The rich man full fond is ywis,
That weneth that he loved is,
If that his herte it understood,
It is not he, it is his good,
He may well weten in his thought,
His good is loved, and he right nought:
For if he be a niggard eke,
Men would not set by him a leke,
But haten him, this is the sooth,
Lo what profite his cattell dooth,
Of every man that may him see,
It getteth him nought but enmitee:
But he amend himselfe of that vice,
And know himselfe, he is not wise.
"Certes he should aye friendly be,
To get him love also been free,
Or else he is not wise ne sage
No more than is a gote ramage.
That he not loveth, his deede proveth,
Whan he his richesse so well loveth,
That he woll hide it aie and spare,
His poore friends seene forfare
To keepen aie his purpose
Till for drede his eyen close,
And till a wicked death him take
Him had lever asunder shake,
And let all his limmes asunder rive,
Than leave his richesse in his live;
He thinketh to part it with no man,
Certaine no love is in him than:
How should love with him be,
Whan in his herte is no pite?
That he trespasseth well I wate,
For each man knoweth his estate,
For well him ought to be reproved
That loveth nought, ne is not loved.
"But sith we arn to Fortune comen,
And hath our sermon of her nomen,
A wonder will I tell thee now,
Thou hardest never such one I trow;
I n'ot where thou me leven shall,
Though soothfastnesse it be all,
As it is written, and is sooth
That unto men more profite dooth
The froward Fortune and contraire,
Than the swote and debonaire:
And if they thinke it is doutable,
It is through argument provable,
For the debonaire and soft
Falseth and beguileth oft,
For lich a mother she can cherish
And milken as doth a norice,
And of her good to him deles
And yeveth him part of her jeweles,
With great riches and dignitie,
And hem she hoteth stabilitie,
In state that is not stable,
But changing aie and variable,
And feedeth him with glorie vaine,
And worldly blisse none certaine,
Whan she him setteth on her whele,
Than wene they to be right wele,
And in so stable state withall
That never they wene for to fall,
And when they set so high to be,
They wene to have in certainte
Of heartly friendes to great numbre,
That nothing might hir state encombre,
They trust hem so on everie side,
Wening with hem they would abide,
In everie perill and mischaunce
Without chaunge or variaunce,
Both of cattell and of good,
And also for to spend hir blood,
And all hir members for to spill
Onely to fulfill hir will,
They maken it whole in many wise
And hoten hem hir full servise
How sore that it doe hem smert,
Into hir very naked shert,
Herte and also hole they yeve,
For the time that they may live,
So that with hir flatterie,
They maken fooles glorifie
Of hir wordes speaking,
And han chere of a rejoysing,
And trow them as the Evangile,
And it is all falshede and gile,
As they shall afterward see,
Whan they arn full in poverte,
And ben of good and cattell bare,
Than should they seene who friendes ware,
For of an hundred certainly,
Nor of a thousand full scarcely,
Ne shall they finde unnethes one,
Whan povertie is commen upon.
"For thus Fortune that I of tell,
With men whan her lust to dwell,
Maketh hem to lese hir conisaunce,
And nourisheth hem in ignoraunce.
"But froward Fortune and perverse,
When high estates she doth reverse,
And maketh hem to tumble doune
Off her whele with sodaine tourne,
And from her richesse doth hem flie,
And plungeth hem in povertie,
As a stepmother envious,
And layeth a plaister dolorous,
Unto hir hertes wounded egre,
Which is not tempered with vinegre,
But with povertie and indigence,
For to shew by experience,
That she is Fortune verilie
In whome no man should affie,
Nor in her yeftes have fiaunce,
She is so full of variaunce.
"Thus can she maken hye and lowe,

Whan they from richesse arn throwe,
Fully to knowen without were
Friend of effect, and friend of chere
And which in love weren true and stable,
And which also weren variable,
After Fortune hir goddesse,
In povertie, either in richesse,
For all that yeveth here out of drede,
Unhappe beareth it indeede,
For infortune let not one
Of friendes, whan Fortune is gone,
I meane tho friendes that woll fle
Anone as entreth poverte,
And yet they woll not leave hem so,
But in each place where they go
They call hem wretch, scorne and blame,
And of hir mishappe hem diffame,
And namely such as in richesse,
Pretendeth most of stablenesse
Whan that they saw hem set on loft,
And weren of hem succoured oft,
And most iholpe in all hir need:
But now they take no maner heed,
But saine in voice of flatterie,
That now appeareth hir follie,
Over all where so they fare,
And sing, Go farewell felde fare.
"All such friendes I beshrew,
For of true there be too few,
But soothfast friendes, what so betide,
In every fortune wollen abide,
They han hir hertes in such noblesse
That they nill love for no richesse,
Nor for that Fortune may hem send
They wollen hem succour and defend,
And chaunge for softe ne for sore;
For who his friend loveth evermore
Though men draw sword him to slo,
He may not hew hir love a two:
But in case that I shall say,
For pride and ire lese it he may,
And for reproove by nicete,
And discovering of privite,
With tongue wounding, as felon,
Through venemous detraction.
"Friend in this case will gone his way,
For nothing grieve him more ne may,
And for nought else woll he fle,
If that he love in stabilitie.
And certaine he is well begone
Among a thousand that findeth one:
For there may be no richesse,
Ayenst friendship of worthinesse,
For it ne may so high attaine,
As may the valour, sooth to saine,
Of him that loveth true and well.
Friendship is more than is cattell,
For friend in court aie better is
Than penny in purse certis,
And Fortune mis-happing,
Whan upon men she is fabling,
Through misturning of her chaunce,
And cast hem out of balaunce.
"She maketh through her adversite
Men full clerely for to see
Him that is friend in existence
From him that is by appearence:
For infortune maketh anone,
To know thy friendes fro thy fone,
By experience, right as it is,
The which is mere to praise ywis,
Than in much richesse and treasour,
For more deepe profite and valour,
Povertie, and such adversitie
Before, than doth prosperitie,
For that one yeveth conisaunce,
And the tother ignoraunce.
"And thus in povertie is indeed
Trouth declared fro falshede,
For faint friendes it woll declare,
And true also, what way they fare.
For whan he was in his richesse,
These friendes full of doublenesse
Offred him in many wise
Herte and body, and service,
What wold he than have you to have bought,
To knowen openly hir thought,
That he now hath so clerely seen?
The lasse beguiled he should have been,
And he had than perceived it,
But richesse n'old not let him wit:
Well more avauntage doeth him than,
Sith that he maketh him a wise man,
The great mischief that he perceiveth
Than doeth richesse that him deceiveth:
Richesse rich ne maketh nought
Him that on treasour set his thought,
For richesse stont in suffisaunce,
And nothing in aboundaunce:
For suffisaunce all onely
Maketh menne to live richly.

"For he that hath mitches tweine,
Ne value in his demeine,
Liveth more at ease, and more is rich,
Than doeth he that is chich,
And in his barne hath sooth to saine,
An hundred mavis of wheat graine,
Though he be chapman or marchaunt,
And have of gold many besaunt:
For in getting he hath such wo,
And in the keeping drede also,
And set evermore his businesse
For to encrease, and not to lesse,
For to augment and multiply,
And though on heapes that lye him by,
Yet never shall make his richesse,
Asseth unto his greedinesse:
But the poore that retcheth nought,
Save of his livelode in his thought,
Which that he getteth with his travaile,
He dredeth nought that it shall faile,
Though he have little worldes good,
Meate and drinke, and easie food,
Upon his travaile and living,
And also suffisaunt clothing,
Or if in sickenesse that he fall,
And loath meat and drinke withall,
Though he have not his meat to buy,
He shall bethinke him hastely,
To put him out of all daungere,
That he of meat hath no mistere,
Or that he may with little eke
Be founden, while that he is seke,
Or that men shull him berne in hast,
To live till his sickenesse be past,
To some maisondewe beside,
He cast nought what shall him betide,
He thinketh nought that ever he shall
Into any sickenesse fall.

"And though it fall, as it may be
That all betime spare shall he
As mokell as shall to him suffice,
While he is sicke in any wise,
He doeth for that he woll be
Content with his poverte
Without neede of any man,
So much in little have he can,
He is apaide with his fortune,
And for he nill be importune
Unto no wight, ne onerous,
Nor of hir goodnesse covetous:
Therefore he spareth, it may well been,
His poore estate for to susteen.

"Or if him lust not for to spare,
But suffereth forth, as not yet ware,
At last it happeneth, as it may
Right unto his laste day,
And take the world as it would be:
For ever in herte thinketh he
The sooner that Death him slo,
To paradise the sooner go
He shall, there for to live in blisse
Where that he shall no good misse:
Thider he hopeth God shall him send
After this wretched lives end.
Pythagoras himselfe rehearses
In a booke that the Golde Verses
Is cleped, for the nobilite
Of the honourable dite:
'Than whan thou goest thy body fro,
Free in the ayre thou shalt up go
And leaven all humanitie,
And purely live in deitie,
He is a foole withouten were
That troweth have his countrey here.'
"In yearth is not our countrey,
That may these clarkes seine and sey
In Boece of Consolation
Where it is maked mention
Of our countrey plaine at the eie,
By teaching of philosophie,
Where lewd men might lere wit,
Who so that would translaten it.
If he be such that can well live
After his rent, may him yeve,
And not desireth more to have,
Than may fro povertie him save.
A wise man saied, as we may seen,
Is no man wretched, but he it ween,
Be he king, knight, or ribaude,
And many a ribaud is merrie and baude,
That swinketh, and beareth both day and night
Many a burthen of great might,
The which doeth him lasse offence,
For he suffreth in patience:
They laugh and daunce, trippe and sing,
And lay nought up for hir living,
But in the taverne all dispendeth
The winning that God hem sendeth;
Than goeth he fardels for to beare,
With as good chere as he did eare;
To swinke and travaile he not faineth,
For to robben he disdaineth,
But right anon, after his swinke,
He goeth to taverne for to drinke:
All these are rich in aboundance,
That can thus have suffisance
Well more than can an usurere,
As God well knoweth, without were.
For an usurer, so God me see,
Shall never for richesse riche bee,
But evermore poore and indigent,
Scarce, and greedy in his entent.
"For sooth it is, whom it displease,
There may no marchaunt live at ease,
His herte in such a were is set
That it quicke brenneth to get,
No never shall, though he hath getten,
Though he have gould in garners yeten,
For to be needy he dredeth sore:
Wherefore to getten more and more
He set his herte and his desire;
So hote he brenneth in the fire
Of covetise, that maketh him wood
To purchase other mennes good;
He underfongeth a great paine,
That undertaketh to drinke up Saine:
For the more he drinketh aie
The more he leaveth, the sooth to say:
Thus is thurst of false getting,
That last ever in coveting,
And the anguish and distresse
With the fire of greedinesse;
She fighteth with him aie, and striveth,
That his herte asunder riveth,
Such greedinesse him assaileth,
That when he most hath, most he faileth.
"Phisitions and advocates
Gone right by the same yates,
They sell hir science for winning,
And haunt hir craft for great getting:
Hir winning is of such sweetnesse,
That if a man fall in sicknesse,
They are full glad, for hir encrease:
For by hir will, without lease,
Everich man shoulde be seeke,
And though they die, they set not a leeke;
After whan they the gould have take,
Full little care of hem they make;
They would that fortie were sicke at ones,
Yea two hundred, in flesh and bones,
And yet two thousand, as I gesse,
For to encreasen hir richesse.
"They woll not worchen in no wise,
But for lucre and covetise,
For physicke ginneth first by (phy)
The phisition also soothly,
And sithen it goeth fro fie to fie,
To trust on hem it is follie,
For they n'ill in no manner gree,
Doe right nought for charitee.
Eke in the same sect are set
All tho that preachen for to get
Worships, honour, and richesse.
Hir hertes arn in great distresse,
That folke live not holily,
But aboven all specially,
Such as preachen vaine glorie
And toward God have no memorie,
But forth as ipocrites trace,
And to hir soules death purchace
And outward shewing holynesse,
Though they be full of cursednesse,
Nor lyche to the apostles twelve,
They deceive other and hem selve:
Beguiled is the guiler than,
For preaching of a cursed man
Though to other may profite

Himself it availeth not a mite :
For oft good predicatioun
Commeth of evil ententioun:
To him not vaileth his preaching
All helpe he other with his teaching,
For where they good example take,
There is he with vaine glory shake.
" But let us leaven these preachours,
And speake of hem which in hir tours
Heape up hir gould, and fast shet,
And sore thereon their herte set :
They neither love God ne drede,
They keepe more than it is nede,
And in hir bagges sore it bind
Out of the sunne, and of the wind :
They put up more than need ware,
Whan they seen poore folke forfare,
For hunger die, and for cold quake ;
God can wel vengeance therof take ;
The great mischiefes hem assaileth,
And thus in gadering aye travaileth ;
With muche paine they winne richesse,
And drede hem holdeth in distresse,
To keepe that they gather fast,
With sorrow they leave it at the last :
With sorrow they both die and live,
That unto richesse her hertes yeve.
And in defaute of love it is,
As it sheweth full well ywis :
For if these greedy, the sooth to saine,
Loveden, and were loved againe,
And good love raigned over all,
Such wickednesse ne should fall,
But he should yeve, that most good had
To hem that weren in neede bestad,
And live without false usure,
For charitie, full cleane and pure :
If they hem yeve to goodnesse
Defending hem from idlenesse,
In all this world than poore none
We should finde, I trow not one :
But chaunged is this world unstable,
For love is over all vendable.
" We see that no man loveth now
But for winning and for prow,
And love is thralled in servage
Whan it is sold for advantage ;
Yet women woll hir bodies sell :
Such soules goeth to the Divell of Hell."

* * * * * *

When Love had told hem his entent,
The baronage to counsaile went,
In many sentences they fill,
And diversly they said hir will :
But after discord they accorded,
And hir accord to Love recorded :
" Sir," sayden they, " we been at one,
By even accord of everichone,
Outtake Richesse all onely
That sworne hath full hauteinly,
That she the castle n'ill not assaile,
Ne smite a stroke in this battaile,
With dart, ne mace, speare, ne knife,
For man that speaketh and beareth the life,
And blameth your emprise ywis,
And from our host departed is,
At least waie, as in this plite,
So hath she this man in dispite :
For she sayth he ne loved her never,
And therefore she woll hate him ever ;
For he woll gather no treasore,
He hath her wrathe for evermore ;
He agilte her never in other caas,
Lo here all hooly his trespas.
She sayeth well, that this other day
He asked her leave to gone the way
That is cleped too much yeving,
And spake full faire in his praying :
But whan he prayed her, poore was he,
Therefore she warned him the entre,
Ne yet is he not thriven so
That he hath getten a pennie or two,
That quietly is his owne in hold :
Thus hath Richesse us all told,
And whan Richesse us this recorded,
Withouten her we been accorded.
" And we finde in our accordaunce,
That False Semblaunt and Abstinaunce,
With all the folke of hir battaile
Shull at the hinder gate assaile,
That Wicked Tongue hath in keeping,
With his Normans full of jangling,
And with hem Courtesie and Largesse,
That shull shew hir hardynesse,
To the old wife that kept so hard
Faire Welcomming within her ward :
Than shall Delight and Well Heling
Fond Shame adoune to bring,
With all her host early and late,
They shull assaylen that ilke gate,
Against Drede shall Hardynesse
Assaile, and also Sikernesse,
With all the folke of hir leading
That never wist what wast slaying.

" Fraunchise shall fight and eke Pite,
With Daunger full of cruelte,
Thus is your host ordained wele ;
Downe shall the castle every dele,
If everiche doe his entent,
So that Venus be present,
Your mother full of vesselage
That can inough of such usage ;
Withouten her may no wight speed
This worke, neither for word ne deed :
Therefore is good ye for her send,
For through her may this worke amend.'

" Lordinges, my mother, the gooddes,
That is my ladie, and my mistres,
N'is nat all at my willing,
Ne doth all my desiring.
Yet can she sometime doen labour,
Whan that her lust, in my succour.
As my neede is for to atchieve :
But now I thinke her not to grieve,
My mother is she, and of childhede
I both worship her, and eke drede,
For who that dredeth sire ne dame,
Shall it abie in bodie or name.
And nathelesse, yet can we
Send after her if need be,
And were she nigh, she commen would,
I trow that nothing might her hold.
" My mother is of great prowesse,
She hath tane many a forteresse,
That cost hath many a pound er this,
There I nas not present ywis,
And yet men sayd it was my deede,

But I come never in that steede,
Ne me ne liketh so mote I thee,
That such towers been take with mee,
For why? Me thinketh that in no wise,
It may be cleped but marchaundise.
Go buy a courser blacke or white,
And pay therefore, than art thou quite,
The marchaunt oweth thee right nought,
Ne thou him whan thou it bought.
I woll not selling clepe yeving
For selling asketh no guerdoning,
Here lithe no thanke, ne no merite,
That one goeth from that other all quite,
But this selling is not semblable:
"For when his horse is in the stable
He may it sell againe parde,
And winnen on it, such happe may be,
All may the manne not lese ywis,
For at the least the skinne is his.
"Or else, if it so betide
That he woll keepe his horse to ride,
Yet is he lord aie of his horse:
But thilke chaffare is well worse,
There Venus entermeteth ought,
For who so such chaffare hath bought,
He shall not worchen so wisely,
That he ne shall lese utterly
Both his monney and his chaffare:
But the seller of the ware,
The prise and profite have shall,
Certaine the buyer shall lese all,
For he ne can so dere it buy
To have lordship and full maistry,
Ne have power to make letting,
Neither for yeft ne for preaching,
That of his chaffare maugre his,
Another shall have as much ywis,
If he woll yeve as much as he,
Of what countrey so that he be,
Or for right nought, so happe may,
If he can flatter her to her pay.
"Been then suche marchauntes wise?
No, but fooles in every wise,
Whan they buy such thing wilfully,
There as they lese hir good follily.
But nathelesse, this dare I say,
My mother is not wont to pay,
For she is neither so foole ne nice,
To entremete her of such vice,
But trust well, he shall paie all,
That repent of his bargaine shall,
Whan Poverte put him in distresse,
All were he scholler to Richesse,
That is for me in great yerning,
Whan she assenteth to my willing.

"But by my mother saint Venus,
And by her father Saturnus,
That her engendred by his life,
But nat upon his wedded wife,
Yet woll I more unto you swere,
To make this thing the surere.
"Now by that faith, and that beautee
That I owe to all my brethren free,
Of which there n'is wight under Heaven
That can hir fathers names neven,
So divers and so many there be,
That with my mother have be prive,
Yet woll I sweare for sikernesse,
The pole of Hell to my witnesse,
Now drinke I not this yeare clarre,
If that I lye, or forsworne be,
For of the goddes the usage is,
That who so him forsweareth amis,
Shall that yeere drinke no clarre.
"Now have I sworne inough parde,
If I forsweare me than am I lorne,
But I woll never be forsworne:
Sith Richesse hath me failed here,
She shall abie that trespasse dere,
At least way but I her harme
With swerd, or sparth, or gisarme.
"For certes sith she loveth not me,
Fro thilke time that she may see
The castle and the tower to shake,
In sorrie time she shall awake;
If I may gripe a rich man
I shall so pull him, if I can,
That he shall in a fewe stoundes,
Lese all his markes, and his poundes.
"I shall him make his pence out sling,
But they in his garner spring,
Our maidens shall eke plucke him so,
That him shall needen feathers mo,
And make him sell his lond to spend,
But he the bet can him defend.

"Poore men han made hir lord of me;
Although they not so mightie be,
That they may feede me in delite,
I woll not have them in dispite:
No good man hateth hem, as I gesse,
For chinch and felonn is Richesse,
That so can chase hem and dispise,
And hem defoule in sundrie wise:
They loven full bette, so God me spede,
Than doeth the rich chinchy grede,
And been (in good faith) more stable
And truer, and more serviable:
And therefore it suffiseth me
Hir good herte, and hir beaute;
They han on me set all their thought,
And therefore I foryete hem nought.
"I woll hem bring in great noblesse,
If that I were god of richesse,
As I am god of love soothly,
Such ruth upon hir plaint have I:
Therefore I must his succour be,
That paineth him to serven me,
For if he dyed for love of this,
Than seemeth in me no love there is."
"Sir," sayd they, "sooth is everie dele
That ye rehearse, and we wote wele
Thilke oath to hold is reasonable,
For it is good and covenable,
That ye on riche men han sworne:
For, sir, this wote we well beforne,
If rich men doen you homage,
That is as fooles doen outrage,
But ye shull not forsworne be,
Ne let therefore to drinke clarre,
Or piment maked fresh and new,
Ladies shull hem such pepir brew,
If that they fall into her laas,
That they for woe mow saine Alas!
Ladies shullen ever so courteous be,
That they shall quite your oath all free;
Ne seeketh never other vicaire,
For they shall speake with hem so faire
That ye shall hold you payd full well,

Though ye you meddle never a deale,
Let ladies worch with hir thinges,
They shall hem tell so fele tidinges,
And moove hem eke so many requestis
By flatterie, that not honest is,
And thereto yeve hem such thankinges,
What with kissing, and with talkinges,
That certes if they trowed be,
Shall never leave hem lond ne fee
That it n'ill as the meble fare,
Of which they first delivered are :
Now may you tell us all your will,
And we your hestes shall fulfill.

"But False Semblaunt dare not for drede
Of you, sir, meddle him of this dede,
For he sayth that ye been his foe,
He n'ot, if ye will worch him woe :
Wherefore we pray you all, beau sire,
That ye foryeve him now your ire,
And that he may dwell as your man
With Abstinence his deere lemman,
This our accord and our will now."
"Parfey," said Love, "I graunt it you,
I woll well hold him for my man,
Now let him come :" and he forth ran.
"False semblant," (quod Love) "in this wise
I take thee here to my service,
That thou our friendes helpe alwaie,
And hindreth hem neither night ne daie,
But doe thy might hem to relieve,
And eke our enemies that thou grieve,
Thine be this might, I graunt it thee,
My king of harlotes shalt thou bee :
We woll that thou have such honour,
Certaine thou art a false traitour,
And eke a theefe ; sith thou were borne,
A thousand times thou art forsworne :
But nathelesse in our hearing,
To put our folke out of doubting,
I bidde thee teach hem, wost thou how ?
By some generall signe now,
In what place thou shalt founden be,
If that men had mister of thee,
And how men shall thee best espie,
For thee to know is great maistrie,
Tell in what place is thine haunting."
"Sir I have full divers wonning,
That I keepe not rehearsed be,
So that ye would respiten me,
For if that I tell you the sooth,
I may have harme and shame both,
If that my fellowes wisten it,
My tales shoulden me be quit,
For certaine they would hate me,
If ever I knew hir cruelte,
For they would over all hold hem still
Of troth, that is againe hir will,
Such tales keepen they not here,
I might eftsoone buy it full dere,
If I saied of hem any thing,
That ought displeaseth to hir hearing,
For what word that hem pricketh or biteth,
In that word none of hem deliteth,
All were it gospell the evangile,
That would reprove hem of hir guile,
For they are cruell and hautain ;
And this thing wote I well certain,
If I speake ought to paire hir loos,
Your court shall not so well be cloos,
That they ne shall wite it at last :
Of good men am I nought agast,
For they woll taken on hem nothing,
Whan that they know all my meaning,
But he that woll it on him take,
He woll himselfe suspicious make,
That he his life let covertly,
In guile and in hypocrisie,
That me engendred and yave fostring."
"They made a full good engendring,"
(Quod Love) "for who so soothly tell,
They engendred the Divell of Hell.
"But needely, howsoever it bee"
(Quod Love) "I will and charge thee,
To tell anon thy wonning placis,
Hearing each wight that in this place is :
And what life thou livest also,
Hide it no lenger now, whereto :
Thou must discover all thy worching,
How thou servest, and of what thing,
Though that thou shuldest for thy sothsaw
Ben all to beaten and to draw,
And yet art thou not wont parde,
But nathelesse, though thou beaten be,
Thou shalt not be the first, that so
Hath for soothsawe suffred wo."
"Sir, sith that it may liken you,
Though that I should be slaine right now,
I shall doen your commaundement,
For thereto have I great talent."
Withouten words mo, right than
False Semblaunt his sermon began,
And saied hem thus in audience,
"Barons, take heed of my sentence,
That wight that list to have knowing
Of False Semblant full of flattering,
He must in worldly folke him seke,
And certes in the cloysters eke,
I won no where, but in hem tway,
But not like even, sooth to say,
Shortly I woll herborow me,
There I hope best to hulstred be,
And certainely, sikerest hiding
Is underneath humblest clothing.
"Religious folke ben full covert,
Secular folke ben more apert :
But nathelesse, I woll not blame
Religious folke, ne hem diffame
In what habite that ever they go :
Religion humble, and true also,
Woll I not blame, ne dispise,
But I n'ill love it in no wise,
I meane of false religious,
That stout been, and malicious,
That wollen in an habite go,
And setten not hir herte thereto.

"Religious folke been all pitous,
Thou shalt not seene one dispitous
They loven no pride, ne no strife,
But humbly they woll lede hir life,
With which folke woll I never be,
And if I dwell, I faine me
I may well in hir habite go,
But me were lever my necke atwo,
Than let a purpose that I take,
What covenaunt that ever I make.
"I dwell with hem that pronde be,
And full of wiles and subtelte.
That worship of this world coveiten,

And great nede connen expleiten,
And gone and gadren great pitaunces,
And purchase hem the acquaintaunces
Of men that mightie life may leden,
And faine hem poore, and hemselfe feden
With good morsels delicious,
And drinken good wine precious,
And preach us povert and distresse,
And fishen hemselfe great richesse,
With wily nettes that they cast,
It woll come foule out at the last.
"They ben fro cleane religion went,
They make the world an argument,
That hath a foule conclusion.
I have a robe of religion,
Than am I all religious:
This argument is all roignous,
It is not worth a crooked brere,
Habite ne maketh neither monke ne frere,
But cleane life and devotion,
Maketh men of good religion.
"Nathelesse, there can none answere,
How high that ever his head he shere,
With rasour whetted never so kene,
That guile in braunches cutte thurtene,
There can no wight distinct it so,
That he dare say a word thereto.
"But what herborow that ever I take,
Or what semblaunt that ever I make,
I meane but guile, and follow that,
For right no more than Gibbe our cat,
(That awaiteth mice and rattes to killen)
Ne entend I but to beguilen,
Ne no wight may, by my clothing,
Wete with what folke is my dwelling,
Ne be my wordes yet parde,
So soft and so pleasaunt they be.
"Behold the deedes that I do,
But thou be blind thou oughtest so,
For varie hir wordes fro hir deed,
They thinke on guile withouten dreod,
What manner clothing that they weare,
Or what estate that ever they beare,
Lered or leud, lord or ladie,
Knight, squire, burgeis, or bailie."
Right thus while False Semblant sermoneth,
Eftsoones Love him aresoneth,
And brake his tale in his speaking
As though he had him told leasing.
And saied: "What devill is that I heare?
What folke hast thou us nempned here?
May menne find religioun
In worldly habitatioun?"
"Yea, sir, it followeth nat that they
Should lead a wicked life parfey,
Ne not therefore hir soules lese,
That hem to worldly clothes chese,
For certes it were great pitee;
Men may in secular clothes see,
Florishen holy religioun;
Full many a saint in field and toun,
With many a virgine glorious,
Devout, and full religious,
Han died, that common cloth aye beren,
Yet saintes nevertheless they weren.
I could recken you many a ten,
Yea welnigh all these holy women
That men in churches hery and seke,
Both maidens, and these wives eke,
That baren full many a faire child here,
Weared alway clothes seculere,
And in the same diden they
That saints weren, and ben alway.
"The nine thousand maidens dere,
That beren in Heaven hir cierges clere,
Of which men rede in church and sing,
Were take in secular clothing,
When they received martirdome,
And wonnen Heaven unto hir home.
"Good herte maketh the good thought,
The clothing yeveth ne reveth nought:
The good thought and the worching,
That maketh the religion flouring,
There lieth the good religioun,
After the right ententioun.
"Who so tooke a weathers skin,
And wrapped a greedy wolfe therein,
For he should go with lambes white,
Wenest thou not he would hem bite?
Yes: nevertheless as he were wood
He would hem wirry, and drinke the blood,
And well the rather hem deceive,
For sith they coude nat perceive
His tregette, and his crueltie,
They would him follow, altho he flie.

"If there be wolves of such hew,
Amonges these apostles new
Thou, holy church, thou maist be wailed,
Sith that thy citie is assailed
Through knightes of thine owne table,
God wot thy lordship is doutable:
If they enforce it to win,
That should defend it fro within,
Who might defence ayenst hem make?
Without stroke it mote be take,
Of trepeget or mangonell,
Without displaying of pensell,
And if God n'ill done it succour,
But let renne in this colour,
Thou must thy hestes letten bee,
Than is there nought, but yeeld thee,
Or yeve hem tribute douteles,
And hold it of hem to have pees:
But greater harme betide thee,
That they all maister of it bee:
Well con they scorne thee withall,
By day stuffen they the wall,
And all the night they minen there:
Nay, thou planten must els where
Thine impes, if thou wolt fruit have,
Abide not there thy selfe to save.

"But now peace, here I turne againe,
I woll no more of this thing faine,
If I might passen me hereby,
For I might maken you weary;
But I woll heten you alway,
To helpe your friendes what I may,
So they wollen my company,
For they been shent all utterly,
But if so fall, that I be
Oft with hem, and they with me,
And eke my lemman mote they serve,
Or they shull not my love deserve,
Forsooth I am a false traitour,
God judged me for a theefe trechour,
Forsworne I am, but well nigh none
Wote of my guile, till it be done.
"Through me hath many one deth received,

That my treget never aperceived,
And yet receiveth, and shall receive,
That my falsenesse shall never apperceive:
But who so doth, if he wise be,
Him is right good beware of me.
But so sligh is the aperceiving
That all to late commeth knowing;
For Protheus that coud him chaunge,
In every shape homely and straunge,
Coud never such guile ne treasoun
As I, for I come never in toun
There as I might knowen be,
Though men me both might here and see.
Full well I can my clothes chaunge,
Take one, and make another straunge.
Now am I knight, now chastelaine,
Now prelate, and now chaplaine,
Now priest, now clerke, now fostere,
Now am I maister, now schollere
Now monke, now chanon, now baily,
What ever mister man am I.
"Now am I prince, now am I page,
And can by herte every language,
Sometime am I hoore and old,
Now am I younge, stoute, and bold,
Now am I Robert, now Robin,
Now frere minor, now jacobin,
And with me followeth my loteby,
To done me sollace and company,
That hight dame Abstinence, and raigned
In many a queint array faigned,
Right as it commeth to her liking,
I fulfill all her desiring.
"Sometime a womans clothe take I,
Now am I a maid, now lady.
"Sometime I am religious,
Now like an anker in an hous.
"Sometime am I prioresse,
And now a nonne, and now abbesse,
And go through all regiouns,
Seeking all religiouns.
"But to what order that I am sworne,
I take the straw and beat the corne,
To jolly folke I enhabite,
I aske no more but hir habite.
"What woll ye more? in every wise
Right as me list I me disguise?
"Well can I beare me under wede,
Unlike is my word to my dede,
Thus make I into my trappes fall
The people, through my priviledges all,
That ben in Christendome alive.
"I may assoile, and I may shrive,
That no prelate may let me,
All folke, where ever they found be:
I n'ot no prelate may done so,
But it the pope be, and no mo,
That made thilke establishing,
Now is not this a proper thing?
But were my sleights apperceived
. . . . . .
As I was wont, and wost thou why?
For I did hem a tregetry,
But thereof yeve I a little tale,
I have the silver and the male,
So have I preached and eke shriven,
So have I take, so have I yeven,
Through hir folly, husbond and wife,
That I lede right a jolly life,
Through simplesse of the prelacy,
They know not all my tregettry.

"But for as much as man and wife
Should shew hir parish priest hir life
Ones a yeare, as sayth the booke,
Ere any wight his housel tooke,
Than have I priviledges large,
That may of muche thing discharge,
For he may say right thus pardee:
"'Sir Priest, in shrift I tell it thee,
That he to whom that I am shriven,
Hath me assoyled, and me yeven
Penaunce soothly for my sin,
Which that I found me guilty in,
Ne I ne have never entencion
To make double confession,
Ne rehearse eft my shrift to thee,
O shrift is right ynough to mee,
This ought thee suffice wele,
Ne be not rebell never a dele,
For certes, though thou haddest it sworne,
I wote no priest ne prelate borne
That may to shrift eft me constraine,
And if they done I woll me plaine,
For I wote where to plaine wele,
Thou shalt not streine me a dele,
Ne enforce me, ne not me trouble,
To make my confession double;
Ne I have none affection
To have double absolution:
The first is right ynough to mee,
This latter assoyling quite I thee,
I am unbound, what maist thou find
More of my sinnes me to unbind?
For he that might hath in his hond,
Of all my sinnes me unbond:
And if thou wolt me thus constraine
That me mote nedes on thee plaine,
There shall no judge imperiall,
Ne bishop, ne officiall,
Done judgement on me, for I
Shall gone and plaine me openly
Unto my shriftfather new,
That hight Frere Wolfe untrew,
And he shall chuse him for mee,
For I trow he can hamper thee;
But lord he would be wroth withall,
If men would him Frere Wolfe call,
For he would have no patience,
But done all cruell vengience,
He would his might done at the leest,
Nothing spare for Goddes heest,
And God so wise be my succour,
But thou yeve me my saviour
At Easter, whan it liketh mee,
Without preasing more on thee,
I woll forth, and to him gone,
And he shall housell me anone,
For I am out of thy grutching,
I keepe not deale with thee nothing.'
"Thus may he shrive him, that forsaketh
His parish priest, and to me taketh.
And if the priest woll him refuse,
I am full ready him to accuse,
And him punish and hamper so,
That he his churche shall forgo.
"But who so hath in his feeling
The consequence of such shriving,
Shall seene, that priest may never have might

To know the conscience aright
Of him that is under his cure:
And this is ayenst holy scripture,
That biddeth every herde honest
Have very knowing of his beest.
But poore folke that gone by strete,
That have no gold, ne summes grete,
Hem would I let to hir prelates,
Or let hir priestes know hir states,
For to me right nought yeve they,
And why it is, for they ne may.
"They ben so bare, I take no keepe,
But I woll have the fat sheepe;
Let parish priests have the lene,
I yeve not of hir harme a bene;
And if that prelates grutch it,
That oughten wroth be in hir wit,
To lese hir fat beastes so,
I shall yeve hem a stroke or two,
That they shall lesen with force,
Yea, both hir mitre and hir croce.
"Thus yape I hem, and have do long,
My priviledges ben so strong."
False Semblant would have stinted here,
But Love ne made him no such chere,
That he was weary of his saw,
But for to make him glad and faw,
He said, "Tell on more specially,
How that thou servest untruly.
"Tell forth, and shame thee never a dele,
For as thine habit sheweth wele,
Thou servest an holy hermite."
"Sooth is, but I am but an hypocrite."
"Thou goest and preachest poverte?"
"Yea, sir, but Richesse hath poste."
"Thou preachest abstinence also?"
"Sir, I woll fillen, so mote I go,
My paunche, of good meat and wine,
As should a maister of divine,
For how that I me poore faine,
Yet all poore folke I disdaine.

"I LOVE better the acquaintaunce
Ten times of the king of Fraunce,
Than of a poore man of mild mood,
Though that his soule be also good.
"For whan I see beggers quaking,
Naked on mixens all stinking,
For hunger crie, and eke for care,
I entremet not of hir fare,
They ben so poore, and full of pine,
They might not ones yeve me a dine,
For they have nothing but hir life,
What should he yeve that licketh his knife?
It is but folly to entremete
To seeke in houndes nest fat mete:
Let beare hem to the spittle anone,
But fro me comfort get they none:
But a rich sicke usurere
Would I visite and draw nere,
Him would I comfort and rehete,
For I hope of his gold to gete,
And if that wicked Death him have,
I woll go with him in his grave,
And if there any reprove me,
Why that I let the poore be,
Wost thou how I not ascape?
I say and sweare him full rape,
That riche men han more tetches
Of sinne, than han poore wretches,
And han of counsaile more mistere,
And therefore I would draw hem nere:
But as great hurt, it may so be,
Hath a soule in right great poverte,
As soule in great richesse forsooth,
Albeit that they hurten both,
For richesse and mendicities
Ben cleped two extreamities,
The meane is cleped suffisaunce,
There lieth of vertue the aboundaunce
"For Salomon full well I wote,
In his parables us wrote,
As it is knowen of many a wight,
In his thirteene chapiter right,
God thou me keepe for thy poste,
Fro richesse and mendicite,
For if a rich man him dresse,
To thinke too much on richesse,
His herte on that so ferre is sette,
That he his creator doth foryette,
And him that beggeth, woll aye greve,
How should I by his word him leve,
Unneth that he n'is a micher,
Forsworne, or els Goddes lier,
Thus sayth Salomon sawes.
"Ne we find written in no lawes,
And namely in our Christen lay,
(Who saith ye, I dare say nay)
That Christ, ne his apostles dere,
While that they walked in earth here,
Were never seene hir bred begging,
For they nolden beggen for nothing.
"And right thus were men wont to teach,
And in this wise would it preach,
The maisters of divinitie
Sometime in Paris the citie.

"AND if men would there gaine appose
The naked text, and let the glose,
It might soone assoiled bee,
For men may well the sooth see,
That pardie they might aske a thing
Plainely forth without begging,
For they weren Goddes herdes dere,
And cure of soules hadden here,
They nolde nothing begge hir food,
For after Crist was done on rood,
With their proper honds they wrought,
And with travaile, and els nought,
They wonnen all hir sustenaunce,
And liveden forth in hir penaunce,
And the remenaunt yafe away
To other poore folkes alway.
"They neither builden toure ne halle,
But they in houses small with alle.
"A mighty man that can and may,
Should with his hond and body alway,
Winne him his food in labouring,
If he ne have rent or such a thing;
Although he be religious,
And God to serven curious,
Thus mote he done, or do trespaas,
But if it be in certaine caas,
That I can rehearse, if mister bee,
Right well, whan the time I see.
"Seeke the booke of Saint Augustine,
Be it in paper or perchemine,
There as he witte of these worchings,
Thou shalt seene that none excusings
A perfit man ne should seeke

By wordes, ne by deedes eke,
Although he be religious,
And God to serven curious,
That he ne shall, so mote I go,
With proper honds and body also
Get his food in labouring,
If he ne have properte of thing,
Yet should he sell all his substaunce,
And with his swinke have sustenaunce,
If he be perfite in bounte;
Thus han the bookes told me:
For he that woll gone idelly,
And useth it aye busily
To haunten other mennes table,
He is a trechour full of fable,
Ne he ne may by good reason
Excuse him by his orison,
For men behoveth in some gise,
Ben sometime in Goddes service,
To gone and purchasen hir nede.
"Men mote eaten, that is no drede,
And sleepe, and eke do other thing,
So long may they leave praying.
"So may they eke hir prayer blinne,
While that they werke hir meat to winne,
Saint Austine woll thereto accord,
In thilke booke that I record.
"Justinian eke, that made lawes,
Hath thus forboden by old sawes:
'No man, up paine to be dead,
Mighty of body, to beg his bread,
If he may swinke it for to gete,
Men should him rather maime or bete,
Or done of him aperte justice,
Than suffren him in such mallice.'
"They done not well so mote I go,
That taken such almesse so,
But if they have some priviledge,
That of the paine hem woll alledge.
"But how that is, can I not see,
But if the prince deceived bee,
Ne I ne wene not sikerly,
That they may have it rightfully.
"But I woll not determine
Of princes power, ne define,
Ne by my word comprehend ywis,
If it so ferre may stretch in this;
I woll not entremete a dele,
But I trow that the booke sayth wele,
Who that taketh almesses, that bee
Dew to folke that men may see
Lame, feeble, weary, and bare,
Poore, or in such manner care,
That con winne hem nevermo,
For they have no power thereto,
He eateth his owne dampning,
But if he lie that made all thing.
And if ye such a truant find,
Chastise him well, if ye be kind,
But they would hate you parcaas,
If ye fellen in hir laas.
"They would eftsoones do you scathe,
If that they might, late or rathe,
For they be not full patient,
That han the world thus foule blent,
And weteth well, that God bad
The good man sell all that he had,
And follow him, and to poore it yeve:
He would not therefore that he live,
To serven him in mendience,
For it was never his sentence,
But he bad werken whan that need is,
And follow him in goode deedis.
"Saint Poule that loved all holy church,
He bade the apostles for to wurch,
And winnen hir livelode in that wise,
And hem defended truandise,
And said, werketh with your honden,
Thus should the thing be understonden.
"He nolde ywis have bid hem begging,
Ne sellen gospell, ne preaching,
Least they beraft, with hir asking,
Folke of hir cattell or of hir thing.
"For in this world is many a man
That yeveth his good, for he ne can
Werne it for shame, or else he
Would of the asker delivered be,
And for he him encombreth so,
He yeveth him good to let him go:
But it can him nothing profite,
They lese the yeft and the merite.
"The good folke that Poule to preached,
Profred him oft, whan he hem teached,
Some of hir good in charite,
But thereof right nothing tooke he,
But of his honde would he gette
Clothes to wrine him, and his mete."

"Tell me than how a man may liven,
That all his good to poore hath yeven,
And woll but onely bidde his bedes,
And never with honds labour his nedes.
May he do so?" "Yea sir." "And how?"
"Sir I woll gladly tell you:
Saint Austen saith, a man may be
In houses that han properte,
As templers and hospitelers,
And as these chanons regulers,
Or white monkes, or these blake,
I woll no mo ensamples make,
And take thereof his susteining,
For therein lithe no begging,
But otherwaies not ywis,
Yet Austen gabbeth not of this,
And yet full many a monke laboureth,
That God in holy church honoureth:
For whan hir swinking is agone,
They rede and sing in church anone.
"And for there hath ben great discord,
As many a wight may beare record,
Upon the estate of mendicience,
I woll shortely in your presence,
Tell how a man may begge at need,
That hath not wherewith him to feed,
Maugre his fellowes janglings,
For soothfastnesse woll none hidings,
And yet percase I may obey,
That I to you soothly thus sey.

"Lo here the case especiall,
If a man be so bestiall,
That he of no craft hath science,
And nought desireth ignorence,
Than may he go a begging yerne,
Till he some other craft can lerne,
Through which without truanding,
He may in trouth have his living.
"Or if he may done no labour,
For elde, or sicknesse, or langour,

Or for his tender age also,
Than may he yet a begging go.
"Or if he have peraventure,
Through usage of his noriture,
Lived over deliciously,
Than oughten good folke comenly,
Han of his mischeefe some pite,
And suffren him also, that he
May gone about and begge his bread,
That he be not for honger dead;
Or if he have of craft conning,
And strength also, and desiring
To worchen, as he had what,
But he find neither this ne that,
Than may he begge till that he
Have getten his necessite.
"Or if his winning be so lite,
That his labour woll not aquite
Sufficiauntly all his living,
Yet may he go his brede begging
Fro dore to dore, he may go trace,
Till he the remnaunt may purchase.
"Or if a man would undertake
Any emprise for to make,
In the rescous of our lay,
And it defenden as he may,
Be it with armes or lettrure,
Or other convenable cure,
If it be so he poore be,
Than may he begge, till that he
May find in trouth for to swinke
And get him clothe, meat, and drinke
Swinke he with his hondes corporell,
And not with hondes espirituell.

"In all this case, and in semblables,
If that there ben mo reasonables,
He may begge, as I tell you here,
And eles not in no manere,
As William Saint Amour would preach,
And oft would dispute and teach
Of this matter all openly
At Paris full solemnely,
And also God my soule blesse
As he had in this stedfastnesse
The accord of the universite
And of the people, as seemeth me.
"No good man ought it to refuse,
Ne ought him thereof to excuse,
Be wrothe or blithe, who so be,
For I woll speake, and tell it thee,
All should I die, and be put doun,
As was saint Poule in derke prisoun,
Or be exiled in this caas
With wrong, as maister William was,
That my mother Hypocrisie
Banished for her great envie.
"My mother flemed him Saint Amour:
This noble did suche labour
To sustene ever the loyalte,
That he too much agilte me:
He made a booke, and let it write,
Wherein his life he did all write,
And would iche renied begging,
And lived by my traveiling,
If I ne had rent ne other good,
What weneth he that I were wood?
For labour might me never please,
I have more will to ben at ease,
And have well lever, sooth to say,
Before the people patter and pray,
And wrie me in my foxerie
Under a cope of papelardie."
(Quod Love) "What divell is this that I here,
What wordes tellest thou me here?"
"What, sir, falsenesse, that apert is?"
"Than dredest thou not God?" "No certes:
For selde in great thing shall he spede
In this world, that God woll drede,
For folke that hem to vertue yeven,
And truely on hir owen liven,
And hem in goodnesse aye content,
On hem is little thrift isent,
Such folke drinken great misease,
That life may me never please.
"But see what gold han usurers,
And silver eke in garners,
Taillagiers, and these monyours,
Bailiffes, beadles, provost, countours,
These liven well nigh by ravine,
The small people hem mote encline,
And they as wolves woll hem eten:
Upon the poore folke they geten
Full much of that they spend or kepe,
N'is none of hem that they n'ill strepe,
And wrine hem selfe well at full,
Without scalding they hem pull.
"The strong the feeble overgothe,
But I that weare my simple clothe,
Robbe both robbed, and robbours,
And guile guiling, and guilours:
By my treget, I gather and threste
The great treasour into my cheste,
That lieth with me so fast bound,
Mine high paleis doe I found,
And my delightes I fulfill,
With wine at feastes at my will,
And tables full of entremees;
I woll no life, but ease and pees,
And winne gold to spend also,
For whan the greate bagge is go,
It commeth right with my japes,
Make I not well tomble mine apes:
To winnen is alway mine entent,
My purchase is better than my rent,
For though I should beaten be,
Over all I entremet me:
Without me maie no wight dure,
I walke soules for to cure,
Of all the world cure have I
In brede and length; boldely
I woll both preach and eke counsailen,
With hondes woll I not travailen,
For of the pope I have the bull,
I ne hold not my wittes dull,
I woll not stinten in my live
These emperours for to shrive,
Or kinges, dukes, and lordes grete:
But poore folke all quite I lete,
I love no such shriving parde,
But it for other cause be:
I recke not of poore men,
Hir estate is not worth an hen.
"Where findest thou a swinker of labour
Have me to his confessour?
But empresses, and duchesses,
These queenes, and eke countesses,
These abbesses, and eke bigines,
These great ladies palasins,
These jolly knights, and bailives,

These nonnes, and these burgeis wives
That riche ben, and eke pleasing,
And these maidens welfaring,
Where so they clad or naked be,
Uncounsailed goeth there none fro me;
And for hir soules safete,
At lord and lady, and hir meine,
I aske, whan they hem to me shrive,
The propertie of all hir live,
And make hem trow, both most and least,
Hir parish priest is but a beast
Ayenst me and my company,
That shrewes been as great (as I)
For which I woll not hide in hold,
No privete that me is told,
That I by word or signe ywis,
Ne woll make hem know what it is,
And they wollen also tellen me,
They hele fro me no privite.
And for to make you hem perceiven,
That usen folke thus to deceiven,
I woll you saine withouten drede,
What men may in the Gospell rede,
Of Saint Mathew the gospellere,
That saieth, as I shall you say here.

"Upon the chaire of Moses
Thus it is glosed douteles,
(That is the olde testament,
For thereby is the chaire ment)
Sitte scribes and pharisen,
That is to saine, the cursed men,
Which that we ipocrites call:
Doeth that they preache, I rede you all,
But doeth not as they doen adele,
That been not weary to say wele.
But to doe well, no will have they,
And they would bind on folke alway
(That been to be beguiled able)
Burdons that been importable;
On folkes shoulders things they couchen,
That they n'ill with their fingers touchen.
And why woll they not touch it, why?
For hem ne list nat sikerly,
For sadde burdons that men taken,
Make folkes shoulders aken.
"And if they do ought that good bee,
That is for folke it should see:
Hir burdons larger maken they,
And maken hir hemmes wide alwey,
And loven seates at the table
The first and most honourable,
And for to han the first chairis,
In synagogues, to hem full dere is,
And willen that folke hem loute and grete,
Whan that they passen through the strete,
And wollen be cleped maister also:
But they ne should not willen so,
The gospell is there ayenst I gesse,
That sheweth well hir wickednesse.

"Another custome use we
Of hem that woll ayenst us be,
We hate hem deadly everychone,
And we woll werry him, as one,
Him that one hateth, hate we all,
And conject how to doen him fall:
And if we seene him winne honour,
Richesse or preise, through his valour,
Provende, rent, or dignite,
Full fast ywis compassen we
By what ladder he is clomben so,
And for to maken him downe to go,
With treason we woll him defame,
And doen him lese his good name.
"Thus from his ladder we him take,
And thus his frendes foes we make,
But word ne wete shall he none,
Till all his frendes been his fone,
For if we did it openly,
We might have blame readily,
For had he wist of our mallice,
He had him kept, but he were nice.
"Another is this, that if so fall,
That there be one among us all
That doeth a good tourne, out of drede,
We saine it is our alder dede,
Yea sikerly, though he it fained,
Or that him list, or that him dained
A man through him avaunced be,
Thereof all parteners be we,
And tellen folke where so we go,
That man through us is sprongen so.
"And for to have of men praising,
We purchase through our flattering
Of riche men of great poste
Letters, to witnesse our bounte,
So that man weeneth that may us see,
That all vertue in us bee.
"And alway poore we us faine,
But how so that we begge or plaine,
We ben the folke without leasing,
That all thing have without having.
"Thus be dradde of the people ywis,
And gladly my purpose is this.
"I deale with no wight, but he
Have gold and treasour great plente,
Hir acquaintaunce well love I:
This much my desire shortly,
I entremet me of brocages,
I make peace and mariages,
I am gladly executour,
And many times a procuratour,
I am sometime messangere,
That falleth not to my mistere.
"And many times I make enquest,
For me that office is nat honest,
To deale with other mennes thing,
That is to me a great liking:
And if that ye have ought to do
In place that I repaire to,
I shall it speden through my wit,
As soone as ye have told me it,
So that ye serve me to pay,
My service shall be yours alway.
"But who so woll chastice me,
Anone my love lost hath he,
For I love no man in no gise,
That woll me reprove or chastise,
But I woll all folke undertake,
And of no wight no teaching take,
For I that other folke chastie,
Woll not be taught fro my follie.

"I love none hermitage more,
All desertes and holtes hoore
And greate woodes everychon,
I let hem to the Baptist Iohn,
I queth him quite, and him release

Of Egipt all the wildernesse;
Too ferre were all my mansiouns
Fro all cities and good touns.
" My paleis and mine house make I
There men may renne in openly,
And say that I the world forsake,
But all amidde I build and make
My house, and swim and play therein
Bette than a fish doeth with his finne.

" Or Antichristes men am I,
Of which that Christ sayeth openly,
They have habite of holinesse,
And liven in such wickednesse.
" Outward lamben seemen we,
Full of goodnesse and of pite,
And inward we withouten fable
Been greedy wolves ravisable.
" We environn both lond and see,
With all the world werrien wee,
We woll ordaine of alle thing,
Of folkes good, and hir living.
" If there be castell or cite
Within that any bougerons be,
Although that they of Millaine were,
For thereof been they blamed there;
Or if a wight out of measure,
Would lene hir gold, and take usure,
For that he is so covetous,
Or if he be too lecherous,
Or these that haunten simonie,
Or provost full of trecherie,
Or prelate living jollily,
Or priest that halt his quein him by,
Or olde hoores hostillers,
Or other baudes or bordellers,
Or els blamed of any vice,
Of which men shoulden doen justice:
" By all the saintes that we prey,
But they defend them with lamprey,
With luce, with elis, with samons,
With tender geese, and with capons,
With tartes, or with cheses fat,
With daintie flaunes, brode and flat,
With caleweis, or with pullaile,
With coninges, or with fine vitaile,
That we under our clothes wide,
Maken through our gollet glide,
Or but he woll doe come in hast
Roe venison bake in past,
Whether so that he loure or groine,
He shall have of a corde a loigne,
With which men shall him bind and lede,
To brenne him for his sinful dede,
That men shull heare him crie and rore
A mile way about and more,
Or els he shall in prison die,
But if he woll his friendship buy,
Or smerten that, that he hath do,
More than his guilt amounteth to.
" But and he couth through his sleight
Doe maken up a toure of height,
Nought rought I whether of stone or tree,
Or earth, or turves though it be,
Though it were of no vounde stone,
Wrought with squier and scantilone,
So that the toure were stuffed well
With all riches temporell:
" And than that he would up dresse
Engines, both more and lesse,
To cast at us by every side,
To beare his good name wide:
" Such sleightes I shall you yeven
Barrels of wine, by sixe or seven,
Or gold in sackes great plente,
He should soone delivered be,
And if he have no such pitences,
Let him studie in equipolences,
And lette lies and fallaces,
If that he would deserve our graces,
Or we shall beare him such witnesse
Of sinne, and of his wretchednesse,
And doun his lose so wide renne
That all quicke we should him brenne,
Or els yeve him such penaunce,
That is well worse than the pitaunce.
" For thou shalt never for nothing
Con knowen aright by hir clothing
The traitours full of trecherie,
But thou hir werkes can espie.
" And ne had the good keeping be
Whylome of the universite,
That keepeth the key of Christendome,
We had been tourmented all and some.
" Such been the stinking prophetis,
N'is none of hem, that good prophet is,
For they through wicked entention,
The yeare of the incarnation
A thousand and two hundred yere,
Five and fiftie ferther ne nere,
Broughten a booke with sorrie grace,
To yeven ensample in common place,
That saied thus, though it were fable,
This is the gospell perdurable,
That fro the Holy Ghost is sent.
Well were it worthe to be brent.
Entitled was in such manere
This booke, of which I tell here,
There nas no wight in all Paris,
Beforne our ladie at parvis,
That they ne might the booke buy,
The sentence pleased hem well truely.
To the copie, if him talent tooke
Of the evangelistes booke,
There might he see by great traisoun
Full many a false comparisoun.
" As much as through his greate might,
Be it of heate or of light,
The Sunne surmounteth the Moone,
That troubler is, and chaungeth soone,
And the nutte kernell the shell,
I scorne nat that I you tell:
" Right so withouten any gile
Surmounteth this noble evangile,
The word of any evangelist,
And to hir title they tooken Christ,
And many such comparisoun,
Of which I make no mentioun,
Might menne in that booke find,
Who so could of hem have mind.
" The universitie that tho was asleepe
Gan for to braide, and taken keepe,
And at the noise, the head up cast,
Ne never sithen slept it fast,
But up it stert, and armes tooke,
Ayenst this false horrible booke,
All ready battaile for to make,
And to the judge the booke they take.
" But they that broughten the booke there,
Hent it anone away for feare,

They n'olde shew it no more a dele,
But than it kept, and keepen wele,
Till such a time that they may see,
That they so stronge woxen bee,
That no wight may hem well withstond,
For by that booke they durst not stond,
Away they gonne it for to bere,
For they ne durst not answere
By exposition no glose
To that that clerkes woll appose
Ayenst the cursednesse ywis
That in that booke written is.
" Now wote I nat, ne I can nat see
What manner end that there shall bee
Of all this that they hide,
But yet algate they shall abide,
Till that they may it bette defend,
This trow I best woll be hir end.
" Thus Antichrist abiden we,
For we ben all of his meine,
And what man that woll not be so,
Right soone he shall his life forgo.
We woll a people upon him areise,
And through our guile doen him ceise,
And him on sharpe speares rive,
Or other waies bring him fro live,
But if that he woll follow ywis,
That in our booke written is.

" Thus much woll our booke signifie,
That while Peter had maistrie
May never Iohn shew well his might.
" Now have I you declared right,
The meaning of the barke and rinde,
That maketh the entencions blinde,
But now at erst I woll begin,
To expoune you the pith within,
And the seculers comprehend,
That Christes lawe woll defend,
And should it kepen and maintainen
Ayenst hem that all sustenen,
And falsely to the people teachen,
That Iohn betokeneth hem to preachen,
That there n'is law covenable,
But thilke gospell perdurable,
That fro the Holy Ghost was sent
To turne folke that ben miswent.
" The strength of Iohn they understond,
The grace in which they say they stond,
That doeth the sinfull folke convert,
And hem to Jesu Christ revert,
Full many another horriblee,
May menne in that booke see,
That been commaunded doubtlesse
Ayenst the law of Rome expresse,
And all with Antichrist they holden,
As men may in the booke beholden.
" And than commaunden they to sleen,
All tho that with Peter been,
But they shall never have that might,
And God toforne, for strife to fight,
That they ne shall ynough find,
That Peters law shall have in mind,
And ever hold, and so mainteen,
That at the last it shall be seen,
That they shall all come thereto,
For ought that they can speake or do.
" And thilke lawe shall not stond,
That they by John have understond,
But maugre hem it shall adoun,
And been brought to confusioun.
" But I woll stint of this matere,
For it is wonder long to here,
But had that ilke booke endured,
Of better estate I were ensured,
And friendes have I yet pardee,
That han me set in great degree.

" Of all this world is emperour
Guile my father, the trechour,
And empresse my mother is,
Maugre the Holy Ghost ywis,
Our mightie linage and our rout
Reigneth in every reigne about,
And well is worthy we ministers be,
For all this worlde governe we,
And can the folke so well deceive,
That none our guile can perceive,
And though they doen, they dare not say,
The sooth dare no wight bewray.
" But he in Christes wrath him leadeth,
That more than Christ my brethren dredeth,
He n'is no full good champion,
That dredeth such similation,
Nor that for paine woll refusen,
Us to correct and accusen.
" He woll not entremete by right,
Ne have God in his eyesight,
And therefore God shall him punice;
But me ne recketh of no vice,
Sithen men us loven communably,
And holden us for so worthy,
That we may folke repreve echone,
And we n'ill have reprefe of none:
Whom shoulden folke worshippen so,
But us that stinten never mo
To patren while that folke may us see,
Though it not so behind hem be.

" And where is more wood follie,
Than to enhaunce chivalrie,
And love noble men and gay,
That jolly clothes wearen alway?
If they be such folke as they seemen,
So cleane, as men hir clothes demen,
And that hir wordes follow hir dede,
It is great pitie out of drede,
For they woll be none hypocritis,
Of hem me thinketh greate spight is,
I cannot love hem on no side.
" But beggers with these hoodes wide,
With sleigh and pale faces leane,
And graie clothes nat full cleane,
But fretted full of tatarwagges,
And high shoes knopped with dagges,
That frounceen like a quaile pipe,
Or bootes riveling as a gipe.
" To such folke as I you devise,
Should princes and these lordes wise,
Take all hir landes and hir things,
Both warre and peace in governings,
To such folke should a prince him yeve,
That would his life in honour live.
" And if they be nat as they seme,
They serven thus the world to queme,
There would I dwell to deceive
The folke, for they shall nat perceive.
" But I ne speake in no such wise,
That men should humble habite dispise,

So that no pride there under be,
No man should hate, as thinketh me,
The poore man in such clothing,
But God ne preiseth him nothing,
That saith he hath the world forsake,
And hath to worldly glory him take,
And woll of such delices use,
Who may that begger well excuse?
"That papelarde, that him yeeldeth so,
And woll to worldly ease go,
And saith that he the world hath left,
And greedily it gripeth eft,
He is the hound, shame is to saine,
That to his casting goeth againe.

"But unto you dare I not lie,
But might I feelen or espie,
That ye perceived it nothing,
Ye should have a starke leasing:
Right in your hond thus to beginne,
I nolde it let for no sinne."
The god lough at the wonder tho,
And every wight gan lough also,
And saied: "Lo here a man right,
For to be trustie to every wight."

"False Semblaunt," (quod Love) "say to mee,
Sith I thus have avaunced thee,
That in my court is thy dwelling,
And of ribaudes shalt be my king,
Wolt thou well holden my forwardes?"
"Yea, sir, from hence forwardes,
Had never your father here beforne,
Servaunt so true, sith he was borne."
"That is ayenst all nature."
"Sir, put you in that aventure,
For though ye borowes take of me,
The sikerer shall ye never be
For hostages, ne sikernesse,
Or chartres, for to beare witnesse:
I take your selfe to record here,
That men ne may in no manere
Tearen the wolfe out of his hide,
Till he be slaine backe and side,
Though men him beat and all defile,
What wene ye that I woll beguile?
"For I am clothed meekely,
There under is all my treachery,
Mine herte chaungeth never the mo
For none habite, in which I go;
Though I have chere of simplenesse,
I am not wearie of shreudnesse,
My lemman, strained Abstinaunce,
Hath mister of my purveiaunce,
She had full long ago be dede,
Nere my counsaile and my rede;
Let her alone, and you and mee."
And Love answered, "I trust thee
Without borow, for I woll none."
And False Semblant the theefe anone,
Right in that ilke same place,
That had of treason all his face,
Right blacke within, and white without,
Thanking him, gan on his knees lout.
"Than was there nought, but every man
Now to assaute, that sailen can"
(Quod Love) "and that full hardely."
Than armed they hem comenly
Of such armour as to hem fell.
Whan they were armed fiers and fell,
They went hem forth all in a rout,
And set the castle all about;
They will not away for no dread,
Till it so be that they ben dead,
Or till they have the castle take,
And foure battels they gan make,
And parted hem in foure anone,
And tooke hir way, and forth they gone,
The foure gates for to assaile,
Of which the keepers woll not faile,
For they ben neither sicke ne dede,
But hardie folke, and strong in dede.
Now woll I sain the countenaunce
Of False Semblant, and Abstinaunce,
That ben to Wicked Tongue went;
But first they held hir parliament,
Whether it to doen were,
To maken hem be knowen there,
Or els walken forth disguised:
But at the last they devised,
That they would gone in tapinage,
As it were in a pilgrimage,
Like good and holy folke unfeined:
And dame Abstinence streined
Tooke of the robe of cameline,
And gan her gratche as a bigine.
A large coverchief of thread,
She wrapped all about her head,
But she forgate not her psaltere.
A paire of beades eke she bere
Upon a lace, all of white thread,
On which that she her beades bede,
But she ne bought hem never a dele,
For they were given her, I wote wele,
God wote of a full holy frere,
That said he was her father dere,
To whom she had ofter went,
Than any frere of his covent.
And he visited her also,
And many a sermon saied her to,
He n'olde let for man on live,
That he ne would her oft shrive,
And with so great devotion
They made her confession,
That they had oft for the nones
Two heades in one hood at ones.
Of faire shape I devised her thee,
But pale of face sometime was shee,
That false traitouresse untrew,
Was like that sallow horse of hew,
That in the Apocalips is shewed,
That signifieth tho folke beshrewed,
That been all full of trecherie,
And pale, through hypocrisie,
For on that horse no colour is:
But onely dead and pale ywis,
Of such a colour enlangoured,
Was Abstinence ywis coloured,
Of her estate she her repented,
As her visage represented.
She had a burdoune all of theft,
That Guile had yeve her of his yeft,
And a scrippe of faint distresse,
That full was of elengenesse,
And forth she walked soberlie:
And False Semblant saynt, je vous die,
And as it were for such mistere,
Doen on the cope of a frere,
With cheare simple, and full pitous,

His looking was not disdeinous,
Ne proud, but meeke and full peesible.
About his necke he bare a Bible,
And squierly forth gan he gon,
And for to rest his limmes upon,
He had of treason a portent,
As he were feeble, his way he went,
But in his sleve he gan to thring
A rasour sharpe, and well biting,
That was forged in a forge,
Which that men clepen coupe gorge.
So long forth hir way they nomen,
Till they to Wicked Tongue comen,
That at his gate was sitting,
And saw folke in the way passing.
The pilgrimes saw he fast by,
That bearen hem full meekely,
And humbly they with hem mette,
Dame Abstinence first him grette,
And sith him False Semblant salued,
And he hem, but he not remued,
For he ne drede him not a dele:
For when he saw hir faces wele,
Alway in herte him thought so,
He should know hem both two,
For well he knew dame Abstinaunce,
But he ne knew not Constrainaunce,
He knew nat that she was constrained,
Ne of her theeves life fained,
But wende she come of will all free,
But she come in another degree,
And if of good will she began,
That will was failed her than.

And False Semblant had he seene alse,
But he knew nat that he was false,
Yet false was he, but his falsenesse
Ne coud he not espie, nor gesse,
For Semblant was so slie wrought,
That falsenesse he ne espyed nought:
But haddest thou knowen him beforne,
Thou wouldest on a booke have sworne,
Whan thou him saw in thilke arraie
That he, that whilome was so gaie,
And of the daunce Jolly Robin
Was tho become a Jacobin:
But soothly what so men him call
Frere preachours been good men all,
Hir order wickedly they bearen
Such ministreles if they weren.
So been Augustins, and Cordileres,
And Carmes, and eke sacked freres,
And all freres shode and bare,
Though some of hem ben great and square,
Full holy men, as I hem deem,
Everich of hem would good man seem:
But shalt thou never of apparence
Seene conclude good consequence
In none argument ywis,
If existence all failed is:
For men may finde alway sopheme
The consequence to enveneme,
Who so that hath had the subtiltee
The double sentence for to see.
Whan the pilgrimes commen were
To Wicked Tongue that dwelleth there,
Hir harneis nigh hem was algate,
By Wicked Tongue adoune they sate,
That bad hem nere him for to come,
And of tidinges tell him some,
And sayd hem: "What case maketh you
To come into this place now?"

"Sir," sayed strained Abstinance,
"We for to drie our penance,
With hertes pitous and devout,
Are commen, as pilgrimes gone about,
Well nigh on foote alway we go
Full doughty been our heeles two,
And thus both we ben sent
Throughout the world that is miswent,
To yeve ensample, and preach also,
To fishen sinfull men we go,
For other fishing, ne fish we,
And, sir, for that charite,
As we be wont, herborow we crave,
Your life to amende Christ it save,
And so it should you not displease,
We woulden, if it were your ease,
A short sermon unto you sain.
And Wicked Tongue answered again,
"The house" (quod he) "such (as ye see)
Shall not be warned you for me,
Saie what you list, and I woll heare."
"Graunt mercie sweet sir deare,"
(Quod alderfirst) dame Abstinence,
And thus began she her sentence.
"Sir, the first vertue certaine,
The greatest, and most soveraigne
That may be found in any man,
For having, or for wit he can,
That is his tongue to refraine,
Thereto ought every wight him paine:
For it is better still be,
Than for to speaken harme parde,
And he that hearkeneth it gladly,
He is no good man sikerly.
"And sir, aboven all other sin,
In that art thou most guiltie in:
Thou speake a jape, not long ago.
"And sir, that was right evill do
Of a young man, that here repaired,
And never yet this place apaired:
Thou saidest he awaited nothing,
But to deceive Faire Welcoming:
Ye sayd nothing sooth of that,
But sir, ye lye, I tell ye plat,
He ne cometh no more, ne gooth parde,
I trow ye shall him never see;
Faire Welcoming in prison is,
That oft hath played with you er this,
The fairest games that he coude,
Without filth, still or loude.
Now dare she not her selfe solace,
Ye han also the man doe chase,
That he dare neither come ne go,
What mooveth you to hate him so?
But properly your wicked thought,
That many a false lesing hath thought,
That mooveth your foule eloquence,
That jangleth ever in audience,
And on the folke ariseth blame,
And doth hem dishonour and shame,
For thing that may have no preving,
But likelinesse, and contriving.
"For I dare saine, that Reason deemeth,
It is not all sooth thing that seemeth,
And it is sinne to controve
Thing that is to reprove;
This wote ye wele, and sir, therefore

Ye arn to blame the more,
And nathelesse, he recketh lite
He yeveth not now thereof a mite,
For if he thought harme, parfay,
He would come and gone all day,
He coud himselfe not absteine,
Now cometh he not, and that is sene,
For he ne taketh of it no cure,
But if it be through aventure,
And lasse than other folke algate,
And thou here watchest at the gate,
With speare in thine arest alwaie,
There muse musard all the daie,
Thou wakest night and day for thought,
Ywis thy travaile is for nought,
And Jelousie withouten faile,
Shall never quit thee thy travaile,
And skathe is, that Faire Welcoming,
Without any trespassing,
Shall wrongfully in prison be,
There weepeth and languisheth he,
And though thou never yet ywis,
Agiltest man no more but this,
Take not a greefe it were worthy
To put thee out of this baily,
And afterward in prison lie,
And fettred thee till that thou die;
For thou shalt for this sinne dwell
Right in the Divels arse of Hell,
But if that thou repent thee:
Ma fay, thou lyest falsely." (Quod he)
"What, welcome with mischaunce now,
Have I therefore herboured you
To say me shame, and eke reprove,
With sorrie happe to your behove,
Am I to day your herbegere
Go herber you elsewhere than here,
That han a lyer called me,
Two tregetours art thou and he,
That in mine house doe me this shame,
And for my sooth saw ye me blame.
Is this the sermon that ye make?
To all the divels I me take,
Or else God thou me confound,
But er men didden this castle found,
It passed not ten dayes of twelve,
But it was told right to my selve,
And as they sayd, right so told I,
He kist the rose privily:
Thus sayd I now, and have sayd yore,
I n'ot where he did any more.
Why should men say me such a thing,
If it had been gabbing?
Right so saide I, and woll say yet,
I trow I lyed not of it,
And with my bemes I woll blow
To all neighbours a row,
How he hath both commen and gone."
Tho spake False Semblant right anone,
"All is not gospell out of dout,
That men saine in the towne about,
Lay no deafe eare to my speaking,
I swere you sir, it is gabbing,
I trow you wote well certainly,
That no man loveth him tenderly,
That saythe him harme, if he wote it,
All be he never so poore of wit;
And sooth is also sikerly,
This know ye, sir, as well as I,
That lovers gladly woll visiten
The places there hir loves habiten:
This man you loveth and eke honoureth,
This man to serve you laboureth,
And clepeth you his freind so deere,
And this man maketh you good cheere,
And everie man that you meeteth,
He you saleweth, and he you greeteth;
He preseth not so oft, that ye
Ought of his comming encombred be:
There presen other folke on you,
Full ofter than he doth now,
And if his herte him strained so
Unto the rose for to go,
Ye should him seene so ofte need,
That ye should take him with the deed;
He coud his comming not forbeare,
Though ye him thrilled with a speare;
It n'ere not than as it is now,
But trusteth well, I sweare it you,
That it is clene out of his thought.
Sir, certes he ne thinketh it nought,
No more ne doth Faire Welcomming,
That sore abieth all this thing:
And if they were of one assent,
Full soone were the rose hent,
The maugre yours would be.
"And sir, of o thing hearkeneth me,
Sith ye this man, that loveth you,
Han sayd such harme and shame, now
Witteth well, if he gessed it,
Ye may well demen in your wit,
He n'olde nothing love you so,
Ne callen you his friend also,
But night and daie he woll wake,
The castle to destroy and take,
If it were sooth, as ye devise;
Or some man in some manner wise
Might it warne him everi dele,
Or by himselfe perceive wele,
For sith he might not come and gone
As he was whilom wont to done,
He might it soone wite and see,
But now all otherwise wote hee.
"Than have ye, sir, all utterly
Deserved Hell, and jollyly
The death of Hell doubtlesse,
That thrallen folke so guiltlesse."
False Semblant so prooveth this thing,
That he can none answering,
And seeth alwaie such apparaunce,
That nigh he fell in repentaunce,
And sayd him, "Sir, it may well be.
Semblant, a good man seemen ye,
And Abstinence, full wise ye seeme,
Of o talent you both I deeme,
What counsaile woll ye to me yeven?"
"Right here anon thou shalt be shriven
And say thy sinne without more,
Of this shalt thou repent sore,
For I am priest, and have poste,
To shrive folke of most dignite
That ben as wide as world may dure,
Of all this world I have the cure,
And that had never yet persoun,
Ne vicarie of no manner toun.
"And God wote I have of thee,
A thousand times more pitee,
Than hath thy priest parochiall
Though he thy friend be speciall.
"I have avauntage, in o wise,

That your priests be not so wise
Ne halfe so lettred (as am I)
I am licensed boldly,
In divinitie for to read,
And to confessen out of dread.

" If ye woll you now confesse,
And leave your sinnes more and lesse,
Without abode, kneele doune anon,
And you shall have absolution."

* * * * * *

TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

B. I. v. I—84.

INCIPIT LIBER PRIMUS.

The double sorrow of Troilus to tellen,
That was kinge Priamus sonne of Troy,
In loving, how his aventures fellen
From woe to wele, and after out of joy,
My purpose is, er that I part froy.
Thou Thesiphone, thou helpe me for t'endite
These wofull verses, that wepen as I write.

To thee I clepe, thou goddesse of tourment
Thou cruell furie, sorrowing ever in paine,
Helpe me that am the sorrowfull instrument,
That helpeth lovers, as I can complaine:
For well sit it, the sooth for to saine,
A wofull wight to have a drery fere,
And to a sorrowfull tale a sorrie chere.

For I that god of loves servantes serve,
Ne dare to love, for mine unlikelynesse,
Prayen for speed, all should I therefore sterve,
So farre am I fro his helpe in derkenesse.
But nathelesse, if this may done gladnesse
To any lover, and his cause availe,
Have he my thanke, and mine be the travaile.

But ye lovers that bathen in gladnesse,
If any droppe of pite in you be,
Remembreth you of passed heavinesse
That ye have felt, and on the adversite
Of other folke, and thinketh how that ye
Han felt, that Love durst you displease,
Else ye han won him with too great an ease.

And prayeth for hem that been in the case
Of Troilus, as ye may after heare,
That he hem bring in Heaven to solace.
And eke for me prayeth to God so deare,
That I have might to shew in some manere,
Such paine and woe, as Loves folke endure,
In Troilus unsely aventure.

And biddeth eke for hem that ben dispeired
In love, that never will recovered be:
And eke for hem that falsely ben apeired,
Through wicked tongues, be it he or she:
Thus biddeth God for his benignite,
So grant hem sone out of this world to pace
That ben dispaired out of Loves grace.

And biddeth eke for hem that ben at ease,
That God hem graunt aie good perseverance,
And send hem grace hir loves for to please,
That it to love be worship and pleasaunce:
For so hope I my selfe best to avaunce
To pray for hem, that Loves servaunts be,
And write hir woe, and live in charite.

And for to have of hem compassioun,
As though I were hir owne brother dere,
Now hearkeneth with a good ententioun,
For now woll I go straight to my matere:
In which ye may the double sorrowes here
Of Troilus, in loving of Creseide,
And how she forsoke him er that she deide.

It is well wist, how that the Greekes strong
In armes with a thousand shippes went
To Troie wardes, and the citie long
Besiegeden, nigh ten yeres ere they stent,
And how in divers wise, and one entent,
The ravishing to wreake of queen Heleine,
By Paris don, they wroughten all hir peine.

Now fell it so, that in the toune there was
Dwelling a lord of great authorite
A great divine that cleped was Calcas,
That in science so expert was, that he
Knew well, that Troie should destroyed be,
By answere of his god, that hight thus,
Dan Phebus, or Apollo Delphicus.

So whan this Calcas knew by calculing,
And eke by the answere of this god Apollo,
That the Greekes should such a people bring,
Thorow the which that Troy must be fordo,
He cast anone out of the toune to go:
For well he wist by sort, that Troie sholde
Destroyed be, ye would who so or n'olde.

Wherefore he to departen softely,
Tooke purpose full, this forknowing wise,
And to the Greekes host full prively
He stale anone, and they in courteous wise
Did to him both worship and servise,
In trust that he hath cunning hem to rede
In every perill, which that was to drede.

Great rumour rose, whan it was first espied,
In all the toune, and openly was spoken,
That Calcas traitour fled was and alied
To hem of Grece: and cast was to be wroken
On him, that falsely hath his faith broken,
And sayd, he and all his kinne atones,
Were worthy to be brent, both fell and bones.

Now had Calcas lefte in this mischaunce,
Unwist of this false and wicked dede,
A daughter, whiche was in great penaunce,
And of her life she was full sore in drede,
And wist ne never what best was to rede:
And as a widdow was she, and all alone,
And n'iste to whome she might make her mone.

Creseide was this ladies name aright,
As to my dome, in all Troies citie
Most fairest ladie, far passing every wight
So angelike shone her native beaute,
That no mortall thing seemed she:
And therewith was she so perfect a creature,
As she had be made in scorning of nature.

This ladie, that all day hearde at eare
Her fathers shame, falshede, and treasoun,
(Full nigh out of her wit for sorrow and feare,
In widdowes habite large of samite brown)
Before Hector on knees she fell adown,
And his mercy bad, her selfe excusing,
With pitous voice, and tenderly weeping.

Now was this Hector pitous of nature,
And saw that she was sorrowfull begone,
And that she was so faire a creature,
Of his goodnesse he gladed her anone,
And said: "Let your fathers traison gone
Forth with mischance, and ye your selfe in joy
Dwelleth with us while you list in Troy.

"And all the honour that men may do you have,
As ferforth as though your father dwelt here,
Ye shull have, and your body shull men save,
As ferre as I may ought enquire and here:"
And she him thanked with full humble chere,
And ofter would, and it had been his will.
She took her leve, went home, and held her still.

And in her house she abode with such meine
As til her honour nede was to hold,
And while she was dwelling in that cite,
She kept her estate, and of yong and old
Full well beloved, and men well of her told:
But whether that she children had or none,
I rede it nat, therefore I let it gone.

The thinges fellen as they don of werre,
Betwixen hem of Troy and Greekes oft,
For sometime broughten they of Troy it derre,
And efte the Greekes founden nothing soft
The folke of Troy: and thus fortune aloft,
And under efte gan hem to whelmen both,
After her course, aie while that they were wroth.

But how this toune came to destruction,
Ne falleth not to purpose me to tell,
For it were a long digression
Fro my matter, and you too long to dwell;
But the Troyan jestes all as they fell,
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite,
Who so that can, may reden hem as they write.

But though the Greekes hem of Troy in shetten,
And hir citie besieged all about,
Hir old usages nolde they not letten,
As to honouren hir gods full devout,
But aldermost in honour out of dout,
They had a relike hight Palladion,
That was hir trust aboven everychon.

And so befell, whan comen was the time
Of Aprill, whan clothed is the mede,
With new grene, of lustie veer the prime,
And with sweet smelling floures white and rede
In sundrie wise shewed, as I rede,
The folke of Troie, their observances old,
Palladions feast went for to hold.

Unto the temple in all their best wise,
Generally there went many a wight,
To hearken of Palladions servise,
And namely many a lustie knight,
And many a ladie fresh, and maiden bright,
Full well arraied bothe most and least,
Both for the season and the high feast.

Among these other folke was Creseida,
In widdowes habite blacke: but natheles
Right as our first letter is now an a,
In beautie first so stood she makeles,
Her goodly looking gladed all the prees,
Nas never seene thing to be praised so derre,
Nor under cloude blacke so bright a sterre,

As was Creseide, they sayden everichone,
That her beheldeu in her blacke wede,
And yet she stood full lowe and still alone
Behinde other folke in little brede,
And nie the dore under shames drede,
Simple of attire, and debonaire of chere,
With full assured looking and manere.

This Troilus, as he was wont to guide
His yonge knightes, lad hem up and doune,
In thilke large temple on every side,
Beholding aie the ladies of the toune,
Now here now there, for no devotioune
Had he to none, to reven him his rest,
But gan to praise and lacke whom him lest.

And in his walk full fast he gan to waiten,
If knight or squier of his companie,
Gan for to sike, or let his eyen baiten
On any woman, that he coud espie,
He would smile, and hold it a follie,
And say hem thus: "O Lord she sleepeth soft.
For love of thee, whan thou turnest full oft.

"I have heard tell pardieux of your living,
Ye lovers, and eke your lewde observances,
And which a labour folke have in winning
Of love, and in keeping such doutaunces,
And whan your pray is lost, wo and penaunces:
O, very fooles, blinde and nice be ye,
There is not one can ware by another be."

And with that word he gan cast up the brow,
Ascaunces, lo, is this not well yspoken,
At which the god of love gan looken low,
Right for dispite, and shope him to be wroken.
He kidde anone his bowe was not broken:
For sodainly he hitte him at the full,
And yet as proude a peacocke gan he pull.

O blinde world, o blind entention,
How often falleth all the effect contraire
Of surquedrie and foule presumption,
For caught is proud, and caught is debonaire:
This Troilus is clomben on the staire,
And little weneth that he mote descenden,
But all day it faileth that fooles wenden.

As proud Bayard beginneth for to skippe
Out of the way, so pricketh him his corne,
Till he a lash have of the longe whippe,
Than thinketh he, "Tho I praunce all beforne
First in the traise, full fat and new yshorne,
Yet am I but an horse, and horses law
I must endure, and with my feeres draw."

So fared it by this fiers and proud knight,
Though he a worthy kinges sonne were,
And wende nothing had had suche might,
Ayenst his will, that should his herte stere,
Yet with a looke his herte woxe on fire,
That he that now was most in pride above,
Woxe sodainly most subject unto love.

Forthy ensample taketh of this man,
Ye wise, proud, and worthy folkes all,
To scornen Love, which that so soone can
The freedome of your hertes to him thrall,
For ever it was, and ever it be shall,
That Love is he that all thinges may bind,
For no man may fordo the law of kind.

That this be sooth hath preved and doth yet,
For this (I trowe) ye know all and some,
Men reden not that folke han greater wit
Than they that han ben most with love ynome,
And strengest folk been therewith overcome,
The worthyest and greatest of degree,
This was and is, and yet man shall it see.

And trueliche that sitte well to be so,
For alderwisest han therewith ben pleased,
And they that han ben aldermost in wo,
With love han ben comforted and most eased,
And oft it hath the cruell herte appeased,
And worthy folke made worthier of name,
And causeth most to dreden vice and shame.

Now sith it may nat goodly be withstond,
And is a thing so vertuous and kind,
Refuseth nought to love for to ben bond,
Sith as him selven list he may you bind;
The yerde is bette that bowen woll and wind
Than that that brest, and therefore I you rede,
Now followeth him, that so well can you lede.

But for to tellen forth in speciall,
As of this kinges sonne, of which I told,
And leven other thing collaterall,
Of him thinke I my tale forth to hold,
Both of his joy, and of his cares cold,
And his werke, as touching this matere,
For I it gan, I woll thereto refere.

Within the temple he went him forth playing
This Troilus, of every wight about,
Now on this lady, and now on that looking,
Where so she were of toune, or of without:
And upon case befell, that through a rout
His eye peirced, and so deepe it went
Till on Creseide it smote, and there it stent.

And sodainely for wonder wext astonned,
And gan her bet behold in thrifty wise:
"O very God," thought he, "wher hast thou wonned,
That art so faire and goodly to devise!"
Therewith his herte gan to spread and rise,
And softe sighed, least men might him here,
And caught ayen his firste playing chere.

She n'as nat with the most of her stature,
But all her limmes so well answering
Weren to womanhood, that creature
Was never lasse mannish in seeming.
And eke the pure wise of her meaning
Shewed well, that men might in her gesse
Honour, estate, and womanly noblesse.

Tho Troilus, right wonder well withall,
Gan for to like her meaning and her chere,
Which somdele deignous was, for she let fall
Her looke a little aside, in such manere
Ascaunces, what may I not stonden here,
And after that her looking gan she light,
That never thought him seen so good a sight.

And of her looke in him there gan to quicken
So great desire, and such affection,
That in his hertes bottome gan to sticken
Of her his fixe, and deepe impression:
And though he earst had pored up and doun,
Than was he glad his hornes in to shrinke,
Unnethes wist he how to looke or winke.

Lo, he that lete him selven so cunning,
And scorned hem that loves paines drien,
Was full unware that Love had his dwelling
Within the subtill streames of her eyen,
That sodainely him thought he felte dyen,
Right with her looke, the spirite in his hert,
Blessed be Love, that thus can folke convert.

She thus in blacke, liking to Troilus,
Over all thing he stood for to behold:
But his desire, ne wherefore he stood thus,
He neither chere made, ne worde told,
But from aferre, his manner for to hold,
On other thing sometime his looke he cast,
And eft on her, while that the service last:

And after this, nat fulliche all awhaped,
Out of the temple, eselich he went,
Repenting him that ever he had japed
Of Loves folke, least fully the discent
Of scorne fell on himselfe, but what he ment,
Lest it were wist on any manner side,
His woe he gan dissimulen and hide.

Whan he was fro the temple thus departed,
He straight anone unto his pallace turneth,
Right with her loke through shotten and darted,
All faineth he in lust that he sojourneth,
And all his chere and speech also he bourneth,
And aie of Loves servaunts every while
Him selfe to wrie, at hem he gan to smile,

And saied, "Lord, so they live all in lust
Ye lovers, for the cunningest of you,
That serveth most ententifelich and best
Him tite as often harme thereof as prow,
Your hire is quit ayen, ye, God wote how,
Not wele for wele, but scorne for good servise,
In faith your order is ruled in good wise.

" In no certaine been your observaunces,
But it onely a sely few points be,
Ne nothing asketh so great attendaunces,
As doth your laie, and that know all ye:
But that is not the worst, as mote I the,
But told I you the worst point, I leve,
All sayd I sooth, ye woulden at me greve.

" But take this: that ye lovers oft eschew,
Or else done of good entention,
Full oft thy ladie woll it misse constrew,
And deeme it harme in her opinion,
And yet if she for other encheson
Be wroth, than shalt thou have a groin anon:
Lord, well is him that may been of you one."

But for all this, whan that he seeth his time
He held his peace, none other bote him gained,
For Love began his feathers so to lime,
That well unneth unto his folke he fained,
That other busie needes him distrained,
So woe was him, that what to done he n'ist,
But bad his folke to gon where as hem list.

And whan that he in chamber was alone,
He doune upon his beddes feet him set,
And first he gan to sike, and eft to grone,
And thought aie on her so withouten let,
That as he sate and woke, his spirit met
That he her saw and temple, and all the wise
Right of her looke, and gan it new avise.

Thus gan he make a mirrour of his mind,
In which he saw all wholy her figure,
And that he well coud in his herte find
It was to him a right good aventure
To love such one, and if he did his cure
To serven her, yet might he fall in grace,
Or else, for one of her servantes pace.

Imagining, that travaile nor grame
Ne might for so goodly one be lorne
As she, ne him for his desire no shame
All were it wist, but in prise and up borne
Of all lovers, well more than beforne.
Thus argumented he, in his ginning,
Full unavised of his wo comming.

Thus took he purpose Loves craft to sewe
And thought he would worken privily
First for to hide his desire in mewe
From everie wight iborne, all overly,
But he might ought recovered been thereby,
Remembring him, that love too wide yblowe
Yelte bitter fruite, though sweet seed be sowe.

And over all this, full mokell more he thought
What for to speake, and what to holden inne
And what to arten, er to love he sought,
And on a song anone right to beginne,
And gan loude on his sorrow for to winne:
For with good hope he gan fully assent,
Creseide for to love, and nought repent.

And of his song not onely his sentence,
As write mine authour called Lolius,
But plainely save our tongues difference,
I dare well say, in all that Troilus
Sayed in his song, lo every word right thus,
As I shall saine, and who so list it heare
Lo this next verse, he may it finde there.

THE SONG OF TROILUS.

" If no love is, O God, what feele I so?
And if love is, what thing and which is he?
If love be good, from whence cometh my wo?
If it be wicke, a wonder thinketh me,
Whan every torment and adversite
That cometh of him, may to me savery think:
For aie thurst I the more that iche it drinke.

" And if that at mine owne lust I brenne,
From whence cometh my wailing and my plaint
If harme agree me, whereto plaine I thenne,
I n'ot, ne why unwery that I feint.
O quicke death, o sweete harme so queint,
How may of thee in me be such quantite,
But if that I consent that it so be?

" And if that I consent, I wrongfully
Complaine ywis: thus possed to and fro,
All sterelesse within a bote am I
Amidde the sea, atwixen windes two,
That in contrary stonden ever mo.
Alas, what is this wonder maladie?
For heat of cold, for cold of heat I die."

And to the god of love thus sayed he
With pitous voice, " O lord, now yours is
My spirite, which that oughten yours to be,
You thank I, lord, that han me brought to this:
But whether goddesse or woman ywis
She be, I n'ot, which that ye do me serve,
But as her man I woll aie live and sterve.

" Ye stonden in her eyen mightily,
As in a place to your vertue digne:
Wherefore, lord, if my servise or I
May liken you, so beth to me benigne,
For mine estate royall here I resigne
Into her honde, and with full humble cheer,
Become her man, as to my lady deer."

In him ne deigned sparen blood royall
The fire of love wherefro God me blesse,
Ne him forbare in no degree, for all
His vertue, or his excellent prowesse,
But held him as his thrall lowe in distresse,
And brend him so in sundry wise aie newe,
That sixty times a day he lost his hewe.

So mochell day fro day his owne thought
For lust to her gan quicken and encrease,
That everiche other charge he set at nought,
Forthy full oft, his hot fire to cease,
To seen her goodly looke he gan to prease,
For thereby to ben eased well he wend,
And aie the nere he was, the more he brend.

For aie the nere the fire the hotter is,
This (trow I) knoweth all this companie:
But were he ferre or nere, I dare say this,
By night or day, for wisedome or follie,
His herte, which that is his brestes eie,
Was aie on her, that fairer was to seene
Than ever was Heleine, or Polixene.

Eke of the day there passed not an hour,
That to himselfe a thousand times he sayd,
" God goodly, to whome I serve and labour
As I best can, now would to God Creseide
Ye woulden on me rue, er that I deide:
My dere herte alas, mine hele and my hew,
And life is lost, but ye woll on me rew."

· dredes weren from him fled,
.h'assiege, and his savation,
sire none other formes bred,
:ments to his conclusion,
on him would have compassion
.o ben her man, while he may dure,
his life, and from his death his cure.

'pe showers fell of armes preve
ctor or his other brethren didden
: him onely therefore ones meve,
was he, where so men went or ridden,
ne the best, and lengest time abiden
:rill was, and eke did such travaile
s, that to thinke it was a marvaile.

ione hate he to the Greekes had,
'or the rescous of the toun,
· him thus in armes for to mad,
y lo, for this conclusioun,
her the bet for his renoun :
to day in armes so he sped,
the Greekes as the death him dred.

this forth tho reft him love his slepe
le his meate his foe, and eke his sorrow
tiply, that who so tooke keepe,
d in his hew both even and morow :
e a title he gan him for to borow
sickenesse, least men of him wend
hot fire of love him brend.

l he had a fever, and fared amis,
: it certaine I cannot sey
is lady understood not this
l her she n'ist, one of the twey :
rede I, that by no manner wey
ed it that she on him rought,
s paine, what so ever he thought.

. felt this Troilus suche wo
was welnigh wood, for aie his drede
, that she some wight loved so,
er of him she would han take heed :
:h him thought he felt his herte bleed,
: woe ne durst he nought begin
her, for all this world to win.

n he had a space left from his care,
himselfe full oft he gan to plaine :
" O foole, now art thou in the snare,
lom japedest at lovers pain :
thou hent, now gnaw thine owne chain ;
rt aie woned ech lover reprehend
fro which thou canst not thee defend.

woll now every lover saine of thee,
e wist ? But ever in thine absence
in scorn, and saine, lo there goeth he
he man of greate sapience,
l us lovers least in reverence :
nked be God, he may gon on that daunce
that Love list feebly avaunce.

thou wofull Troilus, God would,
u must loven, through thy destine)
u beset wer of soch one, that should
l thy wo, all lacked her pitee :
oo cold in love towards thee
e is, as frost in winter Moone,
n fordo, as snow in fire is soone.

" God would I were arrived in the port
Of death, to which my sorow woll me lede :
Ah lord, to me it were a great comfort,
Than were I quite of languishing in drede :
For by my hidde sorrow iblowe in brede,
I shall bejaped been a thousand time,
More than that foole, of whose folly men rime.

" But now help God, and ye my sweet, for whom
I plaine, ycaught ye never wight so fast :
O mercie, deare herte, and helpe me from
The death, for I, while that my life may last,
More than my selfe woll love you to my last,
And with some frendly look gladeth me swete,
Though never more thing ye to me behete."

These wordes, and full many another mo
He spake, and called ever in his compleint
Her name, for to tellen her his wo,
Til nigh that he in salte teares was dreint,
All was for nought, she heard nat his pleint :
And whan that he bethought on that follie,
A thousand fold his woe gan multiplie.

Bewailing in his chamber thus alone,
A friend of his, that called was Pandare,
Came ones in unware, and heard him grone,
And saw his friend in such distresse and care.
" Alas," (quod he) " who causeth all this fare ?
O mercy God, what unhappe may this mene ?
Han now thus sone the Greeks made you lene ?

" Or hast thou some remorse of conscience ?
And art now fall in some devotion,
And wailest for thy sinne and thine offence,
And hast for ferde caught contrition ?
God save hem, that besieged han our toun,
That so can laie our jollitie on presse,
And bring our lustie folke to holynesse."

These wordes said he for the nones all,
That with such thing he might him angry maken,
And with his anger done his sorrow fall,
As for a time, and his courage awaken :
But well wist he, as far as tongues speaken,
Ther nas a man of greater hardinesse
Than he, ne more desired worthinesse.

" What cas," (quod Troilus) " or what aventure
Hath guided thee to seen me languishing,
That am refuse of everie creature ?
But for the love of God, at me praying
Goe hence away, for certes my dying
Woll thee disease, and I mote nedes deie,
Therefore goe way, there n'is no more to scie.

" But if thou wene, I be thus sick for drede,
It is not so, and therefore scorne nought :
There is an other thing I take of hede,
Welmore than ought the Grekes han yet wrought,
Which cause is of my deth for sorow and thought:
But though that I now tell it thee ne lest,
Be thou not wroth, I hide it for the best."

This Pandare, that nigh malt for wo and routh,
Full often sayed, " Alas, what may this be ?
Now friend," (quod he) " if ever love or trouth
Hath been er this betwixen thee and me,
Ne doe thou never such a cruelte,
To hiden fro thy friend so great a care,
Wost thou not well that I am Pandare ?

" I woll parten with thee all thy paine,
If it so be I doe thee no comfort,
As it is friendes right, sooth for to saine,
To enterparten woe, as glad disport
I have and shall, for true or false report,
In wrong and right yloved thee all my live,
Hide not thy woe fro me, but tell it blive."

Than gan this sorrowfull Troilus to sike,
And sayd him thus, " God leve it be my best
To tellen thee, for sith it may thee like,
Yet woll I tell it, though my herte brest,
And well wote I, thou maiest do me no rest,
But least thou deeme I trust not to thee
Now hearke friend, for thus it stant with me.

" Love, ayenst the which who so defendeth
Him selven most, him alderlest availeth,
Wit dispaire so sorrowfully me offendeth
That straight unto the death my herte faileth :
Thereto desire, so brenningly me assaileth,
That to been slaine, it were a greater joy
To me, than king of Grece be and of Troy.

" Suffiseth this, my full friende Pandare,
That I have said, for now wotest thou my wo :
And for the love of God my colde care
So hide it well, I told it never to mo :
For harmes mighten followen mo than two
If it were wist, but be thou in gladnesse,
And let me sterve unknowne of my distresse."

" How hast thou thus unkindly and long
Hid this fro me, thou fool ?" (quod Pandarus)
" Peraventure thou maist after such one long,
That mine avise anone may helpen us :"
" This were a wonder thing," (quod Troilus)
" Thou couldest never in love thy selfen wisse,
How divell maiest thou bringen me to blisse ?"

" Ye Troilus, now hearken," (quod Pandare)
" Though I be nice, it happeth often so,
That one that of axes doeth full evil fare,
By good counsail can keep his frend ther fro :
I have my selfe seen a blinde man go
There as he fell, that could looken wide,
A foole may eke a wise man oft guide.

" A whetstone is no carving instrument,
But yet it maketh sharpe kerving tolis,
And after thou wost that I have aught miswent,
Eschue thou that, for such thing to schole is,
Thus often wise men bewaren by foolis :
If thou so doe, thy wit is well bewared,
By his contrarie is everie thing declared.

" For how might ever sweetnesse have be know
To him, that never tasted bitternesse ?
No manne wot what gladnesse is I trow,
That never was in sorrow, or some distresse :
Eke white by blacke, by shame eke worthines,
Each set by other, more for other seemeth,
As men may seen, and so the wise it deemeth.

" Sith thus of two contraries is o lore,
I that have in love so oft assayed
Grevaunces, ought connen well the more
Counsailen thee of that thou art dismayed,
And eke the ne ought not been evill apaied,
Though I desire with thee for to beare
Thine heavie charge, it shall thee lasse deare.

" I wote well that it fared thus by me,
As to thy brother Paris, an hierdesse,
Which that ycleped was Oenone,
Wrote in a complaint of her heavinesse :
Ye saw the letter that she wrote I gesse."
" Nay never yet ywis," (quod Troilus.)
" Now" (quod Pandare) " hearkeneth, it was thus:

" ' Phebus, that first found art of medicine,'
(Quod she) ' and coud in everie wightes care
Remedie and rede, by herbes he knew fine,
Yet to himselfe his cunning was full bare,
For love had him so bounden in a snare,
All for the daughter of king Admete,
That all his craft ne coud his sorrow bete.'

" Right so fare I, unhappie for me,
I love one best, and that me smerteth sore :
And yet peradventure can I reden thee
And nat my selfe : repreve me no more,
I have no cause I wote well for to sore,
As doeth an hauke, that listeth for to play,
But to thine helpe, yet somewhat can I say.

" And of o thing, right siker mayest thou be,
That certaine for to dyen in the paine
That I shall never mo discover thee,
Ne by my trouth, I keepe nat to restraine
Thee fro thy love, although it were Helleine,
That is thy brothers wife, if iche it wist,
Be what she be, and love her as thee list.

" Therefore as friendfullich in me assure,
And tell me platte, what is thine encheson,
And finall cause of woe, that ye endure :
For doubteth nothing, mine entention
Nas not to you of reprehension
To speake, as now, for no wight may bereve
A man to love, till that him list to leve.

" And weteth well, that both too been vicis,
Mistrusten all, or else all beleve :
But well I wote, the meane of it no vice is,
As for to trusten some wight is a preve
Of trouth, and forthy would I faine remeve
Thy wrong conceit, and do the some wight trust
Thy woe to tell : and tell me if thou lust.

" The wise eke sayth, woe him that is alone,
For and he fall, he hath none helpe to rise :
And sith thou hast a fellow, tell thy mone,
For this n'is nought certaine the next wise
To winnen love, as teachen us the wise,
To wallow and weep, as Niobe the queene,
Whose teares yet in marble been yscene.

" Let be thy weeping, and thy drerinesse,
And let us lesen woe with other speech,
So may thy wofull time seeme the lesse ;
Delighte nought in woe, thy woe to seech,
As doen these fooles, that hir sorrowes echa
With sorrowe, whan they han misaventure,
And lusten nought to sechen other cure.

" Men saine, to wretch is consolation
To have another fellow in his paine:
That ought well been our opinion,
For bothe thou and I of love doe plaine,
So full of sorrow am I, sooth to saine,
That certainly, as now no more hard grace
May sit on me, for why, there is no space.

"If God woll, thou art nought agast of me,
Least I would of thy ladie thee beguile:
Thou wost thy selfe, whom that I love parde
As I best can, gone sithen longe while,
And sithen thou wost, I doe it for no wile,
And sith I am he, that thou trusteth most,
Tell me somwhat, since all my woe thou wost."

Yet Troilus, for all this no word said,
But long he laie still, as he dead were,
And after this, with siking he abraid,
And to Pandarus voice he lent his eare,
And up his eyen cast he: and than in feare
Was Pandarus least that in frenseye,
He should either fall or else soone deye.

And sayd, "Awake," full wonderlich and sharpe,
"What slumbrest thou, as in a litargie?
Or art thou like an asse to the harpe,
That heareth sound, whan men the stringes ply,
But in his mind, of that no melodie
May sinke him to gladen, for that he
So dull is, in his bestialite?"

And with this Pandare of his wordes stent:
But Troilus to him nothing answerde,
For why, to tell was nought his entent
Never to no man, for whome that he so ferde:
For it is sayd, men maken oft a yerde
With which the maker is himselfe yboten
In sundrie manner, as these wise men treten

And nameliche in his counsaile telling,
That toucheth love, that ought been secre.
For of himselfe it woll inough out spring
But if that it the bet governed be.
Eke sometime it is craft to seeme flee
Fro thing which in effect men hunten fast:
All this gan Troilus in his herte cast.

But natheles, whan he had heard him crie,
Awake he gan, and sike wonder sore:
And sayd, "My friende, though that I still lie,
I am not deefe, now peace and crie no more:
For I have heard thy wordes and thy lore,
But suffer me my fortune to bewailen,
For thy proverbes may nought me availen.

"Nor other cure canst thou none for me,
Eke I n'ill not been cured, I woll die:
What know I of the queene Niobe?
Let be thine old ensamples, I thee prey."
"No friend," (quod Pandarus) "therfore I sey,
Such is delight of fooles to beweepe
Hir woe, but to seeken bote they no keepe.

"Now know I that reason in thee faileth:
But tell me, if I wiste what she were
For whome that thee all misaventure aileth,
Durste thou that I told it in her eare
Thy woe, sith thou darst not thy self for fear,
And her besought on thee to han some routh?"
"Why, nay," (quod he) "by God and by my trouth."

"What, not as busily" (quod Pandarus)
"As though mine owne life lay in this need?"
"Why, no parde, sir," (quod this Troilus.)
"And why?"—"For that thou shouldest never speed."
"Wost thou that well?"—"Ye, that is out of dreed,"

(Quod Troilus) "for all that ever ye conne,
She woll to no such wretch as I be wonne."

(Quod Pandarus) "Alas what may this be,
That thou dispaired art, thus causelesse?
What, liveth nat thy ladie, benedicite?
How wost thou so, that thou art gracelesse?
Such evill is not alway botelesse:
Why, put not thus impossible thy cure,
Sith thing to come is oft in aventure.

"I graunt weil that thou endurest wo,
As sharpe as doth he Tesiphus in Hell,
Whose stomacke foules tiren evermo,
That highten vultures, as bookes tell:
But I may not endure that thou dwell
In so unskilfull an opinion,
That of thy woe n'is no curation.

"But ones n'ill thou, for thy coward herte,
And for thine yre, and foolish wilfulnesse,
For wantrust tellen of thy sorrowes smert,
Ne to thine owne helpe do businesse,
As much as speake a word, yea more or lesse,
But lyest as he that of life nothing retch,
What woman living coud love such a wretch?

"What may she demen other of thy death,
If thou thus die, and she n'ot why it is,
But that for feare, is yolden up thy breath,
For Greekes han besieged us ywis?
Lord, which a thank shalt thou have than of this
Thus woll she saine, and all the toun atones,
The wretch is deed, the divel have his bones.

"Thou mayest alone here weepe, cry, and knele,
And love a woman that she wote it nought,
And she will quite it that thou shalt not feel:
Unknow unkist, and lost that is unsought.
What, many a man hath love full dere ybought
Twentie winter that his ladie ne wist,
That never yet his ladie mouth he kist.

"What, should he therrore fallen in dispair?
Or be recreaunt for his owne tene,
Or slaine himselfe, all be his ladie faire?
Nay, nay: but ever in one be fresh and green,
To serve and love his dere hertes queen,
And thinke it is a guerdone her to serve
A thousand part more than he can deserve."

And of that worde tooke heede Troilus,
And thought anon, what folly he was in,
And how that sooth him sayed Pandarus,
That for to slaien himselfe, might he not win,
But both doen unmanhood and a sin
And of his death his ladie nought to wite,
For of his woe, God wote she knew full lite.

And with that thought, he gan full sore sike,
And sayd, "Alas, what is me best to doe?"
To whome Pandare sayed, "If thee it like,
The best is, that thou telle me thy woe,
And have my trouth, but if thou finde it so
I be thy boote, or it been full long,
To peeces doe me drawe, and sithen hong."

"Yea, so sayest thou," (quod Troilus) "alas,
But God wote it is nought the rather so:
Full hard it were to helpen in this caas,
For well finde I, that Fortune is my fo:

Ne all the men that ride con or go,
May of her cruell whele the harme withstond,
For as her list, she playeth with free and bond."

(Quod Pandarus) "Than blamest thou Fortune,
For thou art wroth, ye now at earst I see,
Wost thou not well that Fortun is commune
To everie manner wight, in some degree?
And yet thou hast this comfort, lo parde,
That as her joyes moten overgone,
So mote her sorrowes passen everichone.

"For if her whele stint any thing to tourne,
Than cesseth she Fortune anone to be:
Now sith her whele by no way may sojourn,
What wost thou of her mutabilitie?
Whether as thy self lust she woll don by thee,
Or that she be nought ferre fro thine helping,
Peraventure thou hast cause for to sing.

"And therfore wost thou what I thee beseech?
Let be thy woe, and tourning to the ground:
For who so list have healing of his leech,
To him behooveth first unwrie his wound:
To Cerberus in Hell aie be I bound,
Wer it for my suster all thy sorrow,
By my will she should be thine to morrow.

"Looke up, I say, and tell me what she is
Anone, that I may gone about thy need:
Know ich her aught, for my love tell me this;
Than would I hope rather for to speed."
Tho gan the veine of Troilus to bleed,
For he was hit, and woxe all redde for shame,
"Aha," (quod Pandare) "here beginneth game."

And with that word, he gan him for to shake,
And sayd him thus, "Thou shalt her name tell:"
But tho gan sely Troilus for to quake,
As though men should han had him into Hell,
And sayed, "Alas, of all my woe the well,
Than is my sweete foe called Creseide,"
And well nigh with that word for feare he deide.

And whan that Pandare herd her name neven,
Lord, he was glad, and saied, "Friend so deere,
Now fare a right, for Joves name in Heaven,
Love hath beset thee well, be of good cheere,
For of good name, and wisdom, and manere
She hath inough, and eke of gentlenesse:
If she be faire, thou wost thy selfe, I gesse.

"Ne never seie I a more bounteous
Of her estate, ne a gladder: ne of speech
A friendlyer, ne more gracious
For to doe well, ne lasse had ned to seech
What for to doen, and all this bet to ech
In honour to as farre as she may stretch:
A kinges herte seemeth by hers a wretch.

"And forthy, look of good comfort thou be:
For certainely the first point is this
Of noble courage, and well ordaine the
A man to have peace with himselfe ywis:
So oughtest thou, for nought but good it is,
To loven well, and in a worthy place,
Thee ought not clepe it happe, but grace.

"And also thinke, and therewith glad thee,
That sith the ladie vertuous is all,
So followeth it, that there is some pitee
Amonges all these other in generall,
And for they see that thou in speciall
Require nought, that is ayen her name,
For vertue stretcheth not himself to shame.

"But well is me, that ever I was born,
That thou beset art in so good a place:
For by my trouth in love I durst have sworn,
Thee should never have tidde so fair a grace,
And wost thou why? for thou were wont to chace
At Love in scorne, and for dispite him call
Saint Idiote, lord of these fooles all.

"How often hast thou made thy nice japes,
And saied, that Loves servaunts everichone
Of nicete ben verie goddes apes,
And some would monche hir meat all alone,
Ligging a bed, and make hem for to grone,
And some thou saidest had a blaunch fevere,
And praidest God, they should never kevere.

"And some of hem took on hem for the cold,
More than inough, so saydest thou full oft;
And some han fained oft time and told,
How that they waken, whan they sleepe soft,
And thus they would have set hem self a loft,
And nathelesse were under at the last,
Thus saydest thou, and japedest full fast.

"Yet saydest thou, that for the more part
These lovers would speake in generall,
And thoughten it was a siker art,
For failing, for to assayen over all:
Now may I jape of thee, if that I shall;
But nathelesse, though that I should deie,
Thou art none of tho, I dare well seie.

"Now bete thy brest, and say to god of love,
'Thy grace, lord, for now I me repent
If I misspake, for now my selfe, I love:'
Thus say with all thine herte, in good entent."
(Quod Troilus) "Ah lord, I me consent,
And pray to thee, my japes thou foryeve,
And I shall never more while I live."

"Thou sayst wel," (quod Pandare) "and now I hope
That thou the goddes wrath hast all appeased:
And sith thou hast wepten many a drop,
And saied such thing wherwith thy god is pleased,
Now would never god, but thou were eased:
And think well she, of whom rest all thy wo,
Here after may thy comfort been also.

"For thilke ground, that beareth the wedes wick,
Beareth eke these holsome herbes, as full oft
Next the foule nettle, rough and thick,
The rose wexeth, soote, smooth, and soft,
And next the valey is the hill a loft,
And next the derke night the glad morowe,
And also joy is next the fine of sorrow.

"Now looke that attempre be thy bridell,
And for the best aie suffer to the tide,
Or else all our labour is on jdell,
He hasteth well, that wisely can abide:
Be diligent and true, and aie well hide,
Be lustie, free, persever in thy servise,
And all is well, if thou worke in this wise.

"But he that departed is in everie place
Is no where hole, as writen clerkes wise:
What wonder is, if such one have no grace?

Eke wost thou how it fareth of some service,
As plant a tree or herbe, in sondrie wise,
And on the morrow pull it up as blive,
No wonder is, though 'it may never thrive.

"And sith the god of love hath thee bestowed
In place digne unto thy worthinesse,
Stonde fast, for to good port hast thou rowed,
And of thy selfe, for any heavinesse,
Hope alwaie well, for but if drerinesse
Or over-haste both our labour shend,
I hope of this to maken a good end.

"And wost thou why, I am the lasse afered
Of this matter with my nece to trete?
For this have I heard say of wise lered,
Was never man or woman yet beyete,
That was unapt to suffer loves hete
Celestiall, or els love of kind:
Forthy, some grace I hope in her to find.

"And for to speake of her in speciall,
Her beautie to bethinken, and her youth,
It sit her nought, to been celestiall
As yet, though that her list bothe and kouth:
And truely it sit her well right nouth
A worthy knight to loven and cherice,
And but she doe, I hold it for a vice.

"Wherefore I am, and woll be aye ready
To paine me to doe you this service,
For both you to please, this hope I
Here after, for that ye been both wise,
And con counsaile keepe in such a wise,
That no man shall the wiser of it bee,
And so we maie ben gladded all three,

"And by my trouth I have right now of thee
A good conceit, in my wit as I gesse:
And what it is, I woll now that thou see,
I thinke that sith Love of his goodnesse
Hath thee converted out of wickednesse,
That thou shalt been the beste post, I leve,
Of all his lay, and most his foes greve.

"Ensample why, see now these great clerkes,
That erren aldermost ayen a law,
And ben converted from hir wicked werkes
Throgh grace of God, that lest hem to withdrawe:
They arn the folke that han God most in awe,
And strengest faithed been, I understond,
And con an errour alderbest withstond."

Whan Troilus had herd Pandare assented
To ben his helpe in loving of Creseide,
He wext of his wo, as who saith unturmented,
But hotter wext his love, and than he said
With sober chere, as though his herte plaid:
"Now blissfull Venus helpe, ere that I sterve,
Of thee Pandare I mow some thank deserve.

"But dere friend, how shall my wo be lesse,
Till this be done? and good eke tell me this,
How wilt thou saine of me and my distresse,
Least she be wroth, this drede I most ywis,
Or wol not heren all, how it is,
All this drede I, and eke for the manere
Of thee her Eme, she n'ill no such thing here."

(Quod Pandarus) "Thou hast a full great care,
Lest the chorle may fall out of the Moone:
Why, lord! I hate of thee the nice fare.
Why entremete of that thou hast to doone
For Godes love, I bid thee a boone:
So let me alone, and it shall be thy best."
"Why frend" (quod he) "than done right as thee lest.

"But herke Pandare o word, for I n'olde,
That thou in me wendest so great follie,
That to my lady I desiren should,
That toucheth harme, or any villanie:
For dredelesse me were lever to die,
Than she of me ought els understood,
But that, that might sownen into good."

Tho lough this Pandarus, and anon answerd:
"And I thy borow, fie no wight doth but so,
I raught not though she stoode and herd,
How that thou saiest, but farwell, I woll go:
Adieu, be glad, God speed us bothe two,
Yeve me this labour and this businesse,
And of my speed be thine all the sweetnesse."

Tho Troilus gan doune on knees to fall,
And Pandare in his armes hent him fast,
And saide, "Now fie on the Greekes all:
Yet parde, God shall helpen at the last,
And dredelesse, if that my life may last,
And God toforne, lo some of hem shall smerte,
And yet me a thinketh that this avaunt masterte.

"And now Pandare, I can no more say,
Thou wise, thou wost, thou maist, thou art all:
My life, my death, hole in thine hond I lay,
Helpe me now," (quod he.) "Yes by my trouth I shal."
"God yeeld thee friend, and this in speciall"
(Quod Troilus) "that thou me recommaund
To her that may me to the death commaund."

This Pandarus tho, desirous to serve
His full frende, he said in this manere:
"Farewell, and thinke I woll thy thanke deserve.
Have here my trouth, and that thou shalt here,"
And went his way, thinking on this matere,
And how he best might beseechen her of grace,
And find a time thereto and a place.

For every wight that hath a house to found,
He renneth nat the werke for to begin,
With rakel hond, but he woll biden stound
And send his hertes line out fro within,
Alderfirst his purpose for to win:
All thus Pandare in his herte thought,
And cast his werke full wisely ere he wrought.

But Troilus lay tho no lenger doun,
But anone gat upon his stede baie,
And in the field he played the lioun,
Wo was the Greek, that with him met that daye:
And in the toune, his manner tho forth aye
So goodly was, and gat him so in grace,
That eche him loved that looked in his face.

For he became the friendliest wight,
The gentilest, and eke the most free,
The thriftiest, and one the best knight
That in his time was, or els might be:
Dead were his japes and his cruelte,
His high port and his manner straunge,
And each of hem gan for a vertue chaunge.

Now let us stint of Troilus a stound,
That fareth like a man that hurt is sore,
And is somedele of aking of his wound
Ylessed well, but healed no dele more:
And as an easie patient the lore
Abite of him that goeth about his cure,
And thus he driveth forth his aventure.

EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS.

PROEME.

B. II. V. 1—109.

Out of these black wawes let us for to saile,
O winde, now the weather ginneth clere:
For in the sea the boate hath such travaile
Of my conning, that unneth I it stere:
This sea clepe I the tempestous matere
Of deepe dispaire, that Troilus was in:
But now of hope the kalendes begin.

O lady mine, that called art Cleo,
Thou be my spede fro this forth, and my Muse,
To rime well this booke till I have do,
Me needeth here none other art to use:
For why, to every lover I me excuse,
That of no sentement I this endite,
But out of Latine in my tongue it write.

Wherefore I n'il have neither thank ne blame
Of all this worke: but pray you mekely,
Disblameth me, if any word be lame,
For as mine authour said, so say I:
Eke though I speake of love unfeelingly,
No wonder is, for it nothing of new is,
A blind man cannot judgen well in hewis.

I know, that in forme of speech is change
Within a thousand yere, and wordes tho
That hadden prise, now wonder nice and strange
Thinketh hem, and yet they spake hem so,
And spedde as well in love, as men now do:
Eke for to winnen love, in sundry ages,
In sondry londes sundry ben usages.

And forthy, if it happe in any wise,
That here be any lover in this place,
That herkeneth, as the story woll devise,
How Troilus came to his ladies grace,
And thinketh, so nolde I not love purchase,
Or wondreth on his speech or his doing,
I not, but it is to me no wondring:

For every wight, which that to Rome went,
Halt nat o pathe, ne alway o manere:
Eke in some lond were all the gamen shent,
If that men farde in love, as men done here,
As thus, in open doing or in chere,
In visiting, in forme, or said our saws,
Forthy men sain, ech country hath his laws.

Eke scarsely ben there in this place three,
That have in love said like, and done in all:
For to this purpose this may liken thee,
And thee right nought, yet all is done or shall:
Eke some men grave in tre, som in stone wall,
As it betide, but sith I have begonne,
Mine authour shall I follow, as I konne.

INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

In May, that mother is of moneths glade,
That the fresh floures, both blew, white, and rede,
Ben quick ayen, that winter dead made,
And full of baume is fleting every mede,
Whan Phebus doth his brighte beames spred,
Right in the white Bole, it so betidde,
As I shall sing, on Mayes day the thridde,

That Pandarus, for all his wise speach,
Felt eke his part of Loves shottes kene,
That coud he never so well of loving preach,
It made his hew a day full ofte grene:
So shope it, that him fill that day a tene
In love, for which in wo to bed he went,
And made ere it were day full many a went.

The swallow Progne, with a sorrowfull lay,
Whan morrow come, gan make her waimenting
Why she forshapen was: and ever lay
Pandare a bed, halfe in a slombring,
Till she so nigh him made her waimenting,
How Tereus gan forth her suster take,
That with the noise of her he gan awake,

And to call, and dresse him up to rise,
Remembring him his arrand was to done
From Troilus, and eke his great emprise,
And cast, and knew in good plite was the Moone
To done voiage, and tooke his way full soone
Unto his neces paleis there beside:
Now Janus god of entre, thou him guide.

When he was come unto his neces place,
"Where is my lady," to her folke (quod he)
And they him told, and he forth in gan pace,
And found two other ladies sit and shee,
Within a paved parlour, and they three
Herden a maiden hem reden the geste
Of the siege of Thebes, while hem leste:

(Quod Pandarus) "Madame, God you see,
With your booke, and all the companie:"
"Eigh, uncle mine, welcome ywis," (quod shee)
And up she rose, and by the hond in hie
She tooke him fast, and said, "This night thrie,
To good mote it turne, of you I met:"
And with that word, she downe on bench him set.

"Yea, nece, ye shull faren well the bet,
If God woll, all this yeare," (quod Pandarus)
"But I am sorry that I have you let
To hearken of your booke, ye praisen thus:
For Godes love what saith it, tell it us,
Is it of love, or some good ye me lere?"
"Uncle" (quod she) "your maistresse is nat here."

With that they gonnen laugh, and tho she seide,
"This romaunce is of Thebes, that we rede,
And we have heard how that king Laius deide
Through Edippus his sonne, and al the dede:
And here we stinten, at these letters rede,
How the bishop, as the booke can tell,
Amphiorax, fell through the ground to Hell."

(Quod Pandarus) "All this know I my selve,
And all th'assiege of Thebes, and the care,
For hereof ben there maked bookes twelve:
But let be this, and tell me how ye fare,

Do way your barbe, and shew your face bare,
Do way your book, rise up and let us daunce,
And let us done to May some observaunce."

" Eigh, God forbid :" (quod she) " be ye mad ?
Is that a widdowes life, so God you save ?
By God ye maken me right sore adrad,
Ye ben so wild, it seemeth as ye rave,
It sat me well bet aye in a cave
To bide, and rede on holy saintes lives :
Let maidens gon to daunce, and yonge wives."

" As ever thrive I," (quod this Pandarus)
" Yet could I tell o thing, to done you play :"
" Now uncle dere," (quod she) " tell it us
For Godes love, is than th'assiege awey ?
I am of Greekes ferde, so that I dey :"
" Nay, nay," (quod he) " as ever mote I thrive,
It is a thing well bet than suche five."

" Ye holy God," (quod she) " what thing is that,
What, bet than suche five ? eigh nay ywis,
For all this world ne can I reden what
It shoulde ben ; some jape I trow it is,
And but your selven tell us what it is,
My wit is for to arede it all to leane :
As helpe me God, I n'ot what that ye meane."

" And I your borow, ne never shall," (quod he)
" This thing be told to you, as mote I thrive :"
" And why, uncle mine, why so ? " (quod she)
" By God," (quod he) " that woll I tell as blive,
For prouder woman is there none on live,
And ye it wist, in all the toune of Troy :
I jape nat, so ever have I joy."

Tho gan she wondren more than before,
A thousand fold, and downe her eyen cast :
For never sith the time that she was bore,
To knowen thing desired she so fast,
And with a sike, she said him at the last,
" Now uncle mine, I n'ill you not displease,
Nor asken more, that may do you disease."

So after this, with many wordes glade,
And friendly tales, and with merry chere,
Of this and that they speake, and gonnen wade
In many an unkouth glad and deepe matere,
As friendes done, whan they bethe yfere,
Till she gan asken him how Hector ferde,
That was the tounes wall, and Greekes yerde.

" Full wel I thanke it God," said Pandarus,
" Save in his arme he hath a little wound,
And eke his fresh brother Troilus,
The wise worthy Hector the secound,
In whom that every vertue list habound,
And first all trouthe, and all gentlenesse,
Wisedom, honour, freedom, and worthinesse."

" In good faith, eme," (quod she) " that liketh me,
They faren well, God save hem both two :
For trewliche, I hold it great deintie,
A kinges sonne in armes well to do,
And be of good conditions thereto :
For great power, and morall vertue here
Is selde iseene in one persone ifere."

" In good faith, that is sooth" (quod Pandarus)
" But by my trouth the king hath sonnes twey,
That is to meane, Hector and Troilus,
That certainly though that I should dey,
They ben as void of vices, dare I sey,
As any men that liven under Sunne,
Hir might is wide yknow, and what they conne.

" Of Hector needeth it no more for to tell,
In all this world there n'is a better knight
Than he, that is of worthinesse the well,
And he well more vertue hath than might,
This knoweth many a wise and worthy knight :
And the same prise of Troilus I sey,
God helpe me so, I know not suche twey."

" By God," (quod she) " of Hector that is sooth,
And of Troilus the same thing trow I :
For dredelesse, men telleth that he dooth
In armes day by day so worthely,
And beareth him here at home so gently
To every wight, that all prise hath he
Of hem that me were levest praised be."

" Ye say right sooth ywis," (quod Pandarus)
" For yesterday, who so had with him been,
Mighten have wondred upon Troilus,
For never yet so thicke a swarme of been
Ne flew, as Greekes from him gan fleen,
And through the field in every wightes eare,
There was no crie, but Troilus is there.

" Now here, now there, he hunted hem so fast,
There nas but Greekes blood, and Troilus,
Now him he hurt, and him all doun he cast,
Aye where he went it was arraied thus :
He was hir death, and shield and life for us,
That as the day ther durst him none withstond,
While that he held his bloody swerd in hond.

" Thereto he is the friendliest man
Of great estate, that ever I saw my live :
And where him list, best fellowship can
To such as him thinketh able for to thrive."
And with that word, tho Pandarus as blive
He tooke his leave, and said, " I woll gon hen :"
" Nay, blame have I, uncle," (quod she then.)

" What eileth you to be weary thus soone,
And nameliche of women, woll ye so ?
Nay sitteth doune, by God I have to done
With you, to speake of wisedome er ye go :"
And every wight that was about hem tho,
That heard that, gan ferre away to stond,
While they two had all that hem list in hond.

Whan that her tale all brought was to an end
Of her estate, and of her governaunce,
(Quod Pandarus) " Now time is that I wend,
But yet I say, ariseth, let us daunce,
And cast your widdows habit to mischaunce :
What list you thus your selfe to disfigure,
Sith you is tidde so glad an aventure ?"

" But well bethought : for love of God," (quod she)
Shall I not weten what ye meane of this ?"
" No, this thing asketh leaser tho," (quod he)
" And eke me would full much greve ywis.
If I it told, and ye it tooke amis :
Yet were it bette my tongue to hold still,
Than say a sooth, that were ayenst your will.

" For nece mine, by the goddesse Minerve,
And Jupiter, that maketh the thunderring,
And the blisfull Venus, that I serve,
Ye ben the woman in this world living

Withouten paramours, to my weting,
That I best love, and lothest am to greve,
And that ye weten well your selfe, I leve."

"Ywis mine uncle," (quod she) "graunt mercy,
Your friendship have I founden ever yet,
I am to no man beholden truely
So much as you, and have so little quit:
And with the grace of God, emforth my wit
As in my guilt, I shall you never offend,
And if I have ere this, I woll amend.

"But for the love of God I you beseech
As ye be he that I love most and trist,
Let be to me your fremed manner speech,
And say to me your nece what you list:"
And with that word her uncle anon her kist,
And said, "Gladly my leve nece so dere,
Take it for good that I shall say you here."

With that she gan her eien doune to cast,
And Pandarus to coughe gan a lite,
And said: "Nece, alway lo, to the last,
How so it be, that some men hem delite
With subtle art hir tales for tendite,
Yet for all that in hir entention,
Hir tale is all for some conclusion.

"And sith the end is every tales strength,
And this matter is so behovedly,
What should I paint it or drawen it on length
To you, that ben my friend so faithfully?"
And with that word he gan right inwardly
Beholden her, and looken in her face,
And said, "On such a mirrour much good grace."

Than thought he thus, "If I my tale endite
Ought hard, or make a processe any while,
She shall no savour have therein but lite,
And trow I would her in my will beguile:
For tender wittes wenen all be wile,
Whereas they con nat plainlich understond:
Forthy her wit to serven woll I fond."

And looked on her in a busie wise,
And she was ware that he beheld her so:
"Ah lord," (quod she) "so fast ye me avise,
Saw ye me never ere now, what say ye no?"
"Yes, yes," (quod he) "and bet woll ere I go:
But by my trouth I thought nowe, if ye
Be fortunate: for now men shall it see.

"For every wight some goodly aventure,
Sometime is shape, if he it can receiven:
But if he n'ill take of it no cure
Whan that it cometh, but wilfully it weiven:
Lo, neither case nor fortune him deceiven,
But right his own slouth and wretchednesse:
And such a wight is for to blame, I gesse.

"Good aventure, O belle nece, have ye
Full lightly founden, and ye conne it take:
And for the love of God, and eke of me,
Catch it anone, least aventure slake:
What should I lenger processe of it make,
Yeve me your hond, for in this world is non,
If that you list, a wight so well begon.

"And sith I speake of good ententioun,
As I to you have told well here beforne,
And love as well your honour and renoun,
As any creature in all the world yborne:
By all the othes that I have you sworne,
And ye be wroth therefore or wene I lie,
Ne shall I never seene you eft with eie.

"Beth nat agast, ne quaketh nat, whereto?
Ne chaunge nat for fere so your hew,
For hardely the worst of this is do:
And though my tale as now be to you new,
Yet trust alway: ye shall me finde true,
And were it thing that me thought unfitting,
To you ne would I no such tales bring."

"Now, my good eme, for Godes love I prey,"
(Quod she) "come off tell me what it is:
For both I am agast what ye woll say,
And eke me longeth it to wit ywis:
For whether it be well, or be amis,
Say on, let me not in this feare dwell."
"So woll I done, now hearkeneth I shall tell:

"Now, nece mine, the kinges own dere sonne,
The good, wise, worthy, fresh, and free,
Which alway for to done well is his wonne,
The noble Troilus so loveth thee,
That but ye helpe, it woll his bane be,
Lo here is all, what should I more sey?
Doth what you list, to make him live or dey.

"But if ye let him die, I woll sterven,
Have here my trouthe, nece, I nill not lien,
All should I with this knife my throte kerven
With that the teares burst out of his eien,
And said, "If that ye done us both dien
Thus guiltlesse, than have ye fished faire:
What mend ye, though that we both apaire?

"Alas, he which that is my lord so dere,
That trewe man, that noble gentle knight,
That nought desireth but your friendly chere,
I see him dien, there he goeth upright:
And hasteth him with all his fulle might
For to ben slaine, if his fortune assent,
Alas that God you such a beautie sent.

"If it be so that ye so cruell be,
That of his death you listeth nought to retch,
That is so trew and worthy as we see,
No more than of a japer or a wretch,
If ye be such, your beaute may nat stretch,
To make amendes of so cruell a dede:
Avisement is good before the nede.

"Wo worth the faire gemme vertulesse,
Wo worth that hearbe also that doth no bote,
Wo worth the beauty that is routhlesse,
Wo worth that wight that trede ech under fote
And ye that ben of beautie croppe and rote,
If therewithall in you ne be no routh,
Than is it harme ye liven by my trouth.

"And also thinke well, that this is no gaud,
For me were lever, thou, I, and he
Were honged, than I should ben his baud,
As high as men might on us all ysee:
I am thine eme, the shame were to mee,
As well as thee, if that I should assent
Through mine abet, that he thine honour shent

"Now understond, for I you nought requere
To bind you to him, through no behest,
Save onely that ye make him better cheere
Than ye han don or this, and more feste,

So that his life be saved at the leste:
This al and some, and plainly our entente,
God helpe me so, I never other mente.

" Lo, this request is nought but skill ywis,
Ne doubt of reason parde is there none:
I set the worst, that ye dreden this,
Men would wonder to seen him come and gone:
There ayenst answere I thus anone,
That every wight, but he be foole of kind,
Woll deeme it love of frendship in his mind.

" What, who woll demen tho he see a man
To temple gone, that he the images eateth?
Thinke eke, how well and wisely that he can
Govern himselfe, that he nothing foryetteth,
That wher he cometh, he pris and thonk him getteth;
And eke thereto he shal come here so seld,
What force were it, thogh all the toun beheld.

" Such love of friends reigneth thorow al this toun:
And wrie you in that mantle evermo,
And God so wis be my salvatioun
As I have sayd, your best is to do so:
But, good nece, alway to stint his wo,
So let your daunger sugred ben alite,
That of his death ye be not all to wite."

Creseide, which that herd him in this wise,
Thought, 'I shall felen what he meaneth ywis:'
" Now eme," (quod she) " what would ye devise?
What is your rede, I should done of this?"
" That is well said," (quod he) " certaine best is,
That ye him love ayen for his loving,
And love for love is skilfull guerdoning.

" Thinke eke how elde wasteth every hour
In each of you a part of beaute,
And therefore, ere that age the devour,
Go love, for old there woll no wight of thee:
Let this proverbe, a lore unto you bee,
'Too late yware' (quod beaute) 'whan it past,
And elde daunteth daunger, at the last.'

" The kinges foole is wont to crie aloud,
Whan that he thinketh a woman bereth her hie,
'So longe mote ye liven, and all proud,
Till crowes feet growen under your eie,
And send you than a mirrour in to prie,
In which that ye may see your face a morow,'
Nece, I bid him wish you no more sorow."

With this he stint, and caste down the head,
And she began to brest and wepe anone,
And said, " Alas for wo, why nere I dead,
For of this world the faith is all agone:
Alas, what shoulden straunge unto me done,
Whan he that for my best frende I wend,
Rate me to love, and should it me defend.

" Alas, I would have trusted doubteles,
That if that I, through my disaventure,
Had loved either him or Achilles,
Hector, any other creature,
Ye nolde have had mercy ne measure
On me, but alway had me in repreve:
This false world alas, who may it leve?

" What? is this all the joy and all the feast?
Is this your rede? is this my blisfull caas?
Is this the very mede of your behest?
Is all this painted processe said (alas)
Right for this fine? O lady mine Pallas,
Thou in this dredefull case for me purvey,
For so astonied am I, that I dey."

With that she gan full sorrowfully to sike,
" Ne may it be no bet," (quod Pandarus)
" By God I shall no more come here this weke,
And God toforne, that am mistrusted thus:
I see well now ye setten light of us,
Or of our death, alas, I wofull wretch,
Might he yet live, of me were nought to retch.

" O cruell god, O dispitous Marte,
O furies three of Hell, on you I crie,
So let me never out of this house depart,
If that I meant harme or villanie:
But sith I see my lord mote needes die,
And I with him, here I me shrive and sey,
That wickedly ye done us both to dey.

" But sith it liketh you, that I be dead,
By Neptunus, that god is of the see,
Fro this forth shall I never eaten bread,
Till that I mine owne herte blood may see:
For certaine I woll die as soone as hee."
And up he stert, and on his way he raught,
Till she againe him by the lappe caught.

Creseide, which that well nigh starf for feare,
So as she was the fearfullest wight
That might be, and heard eke with her eare,
And saw the sorrowfull earnest of the knight,
And in his praier saw eke none unright,
And for the harme eke that might fall more,
She gan to rew and dread her wonder sore.

And thought thus, " Unhapes do fallen thicke
Alday for love, and in such manner caas,
As men ben cruell in hemselfe and wicke:
And if this man slee here himselfe, alas,
In my presence, it n'ill be no solas,
What men would of it deme I can nat say,
It needeth me full slighly for to play."

And with a sorowfull sigh, she said thrie,
" Ah, Lord, what me is tidde a sorry chaunce,
For mine estate lieth in jeopardie,
And eke mine emes life lieth in ballaunce:
But nathelesse, with Godes governaunce
I shall so done, mine honour shall I keepe,
And eke his life, and stinte for to weepe.

" Of harmes two, the lesse is for to chese,
Yet had I lever maken him good chere
In honour, than my emes life to lese,
Ye sain, ye nothing eles me requere."
" No wis," (quod he) " mine owne nece so dere."
" Now well" (quod she) " and I woll done my paine
I shall mine herte ayen my lust constraine.

" But that I nill nat holden him in hond,
Ne love a man, that can I naught ne may,
Ayenst my will, but eles woll I fonde,
Mine honour save, plesen him fro day to day,
Thereto nolde I not ones have said nay,
But that I dredde, as in my fantasie:
But cesse cause, aie cesseth maladie.

" But here I make a protestacion,
That in this processe if ye deper go,
That certainly, for no salvation
Of you, though that ye sterven bothe two,

Though all the world on o day be my fo,
Ne shall I never on him have other routhe :"
" I graunt wel," (quod Pandare) by my trouthe.

" But maie I trust well to you," (quod he)
" That of this thing that ye han hight me here
Ye woll it holde truely unto me ?"
" Yea doubtlesse," (quod she) " mine uncle dere."
" Ne that I shall have cause in this matere "
(Quod he) " to plain, or ofter you to preach ?"
" Why no parde, what nedeth more speach."

Tho fell they in other tales glade
Till at the last, " O good Eme," (quod she tho)
" For love of God which that us bothe made,
Tell me how first ye wisten of his wo :
Wot none of it but ye ?" he said " No :"
" Can he well speake of love," (quod she) "I preie ?
Tell me, for I the bet shall me purveie."

Tho Pandarus a litel gan to smile,
And saied : " By my trouth I shall now tell,
This other daie, nat gon full long while,
Within the paleis gardin by a well
Gan he and I, well halfe a day to dwell,
Right for to speaken of an ordinaunce,
How we the Grekes mighten disavaunce.

" Sone after that we gone for to lepe,
And casten with our dartes to and fro :
Till at the last, he saied, he would slepe,
And on the grasse adoune he laied him tho,
And I after gan to romen to and fro,
Till that I heard, as I walked alone,
How he began full wofully to grone.

" Tho gan I stalke him softly behind,
And sikerly the sothe for to saine,
As I can clepe ayen now to my mind,
Right thus to love he gan him for to plain,
He saied : ' Lorde, have routh upon my pain,
All have I been rebell in mine entent,
Now (mea culpa) lord I me repent.

" ' O God, that at thy disposicion
Ledest the fine, by just purveiaunce
Of every wight, my lowe confession
Accept in gree, and sende me soche penaunce
As liketh thee, but from me disesperaunce,
That may my ghost departe alway fro the,
Thou be my shilde, for thy benignite.

" ' For certes, lorde, so sore hath she me wounded
That stode in blacke, with loking of hir iyen,
That to mine hertes botome it is yfounded
Through which I wot, that I must nedes dien ;
This is the worst, I dare me nought bewrien,
And well the hoter been the gledes rede
That men hem wren with ashen pale and dede.'

" With that he smote his hedde adoune anone
And gan to muttre, I na't what truely,
And I with that gan still awaie to gone
And lete thereof, as nothing wist had I,
And come again anon and stode him by
And saied, ' Awake, ye slepen all to long :
It semeth nought that love doth you wrong.

" ' That slepen so that no man maie you wake ;
Who seie ever er this so dull a man ?'
' Ye, frende,' (quod he) ' doe ye your heddes ake
For love, and let me liven as I can.'

But lorde though he for wo was pale and wan ;
Yet made he tho as fresh a countenaunce,
As though he should have led the newe daunce.

" This passed forth, till now this other daie
It fell that I come roming all alone
Into his chambre, and founde how that he laie
Upon his bedde : but man so sore grone
Ne heard I never, and what was his mone
Ne wist I nought, for as I was comming
All sodainly he left his complaining.

" Of whiche I toke somwhat suspection,
And nere I come, and found him wepe sore ;
And God so wise be my salvacion,
As never of thing had I no routh more :
For neither with engine, ne with no lore,
Unnethes might I fro the death him kepe,
That yet fele I mine herte for him wepe.

" And God wot never sith that I was borne
Was I so busie no man for to preache,
Ne never was to wight so depe sworne,
Er he me told, who might been his leache ;
But not to you rehearsen all his speach,
Or all his wofull wordes for to sowne,
Ne bid me nought, but ye woll se me swone.

" But for to save his life, and eles nought,
And to none harme of you, thus am I driven,
And for the love of God that us hath wrought
Soche chere him doth, that he and I maie liven ;
Now have I plat to you mine herte shriven,
And sith ye wote that mine entent is cleane
Take hede thereof, for none evill I meane.

" And right good thrift, I pray to God have ye,
That han soche one ycaught withouten net,
And be ye wise, as ye be faire to se,
Well in the ring, than is the rubie set ;
There were never two so well ymet
Whan ye been his all hole, as he is your :
There mightie God yet graunt us to se the hour."

" Naie thereof spake I nat : A ha !" (quod she)
" As helpe me God, ye shenden every dele :"
" A mercie, dere nece, anon " (quod he)
" What so I spake, I ment nought but wele,
By Mars the god, that helmed is of stele :
Now beth not wroth, my blood, my nece dere."
" Now well," (quod she) " foryeven be it here.'

With this he toke his leave, and home he went,
Ye, Lord, how he was glad, and well bigon :
Creseide arose, no lenger she ne shent,
But streight into her closet went anon,
And set her doune, as still as any stone,
And every word gan up and doune to wind,
That he had said as it came her to mind.

And woxe somdele astonied in her thought,
Right for the newe case, but whan that she
Was full avised, tho found she right nought,
Of perill, why that she ought aferde be :
For man may love of possibilite
A woman so, his herte may to brest,
And she nat love ayen, but if her lest.

But as she sat alone, and thought thus,
Th'ascrie arose at skarmoch all without,
And men cried in the strete, " Se Troilus
Hath right now put to flight the Grekes rout."

With that gonne all her meine for to shout:
"A, go we se, cast up the gates wide,
For through this strete he mote to paleis ride."

For other waie is fro the gates none,
Of Dardanus, there open is the cheine:
With that come he, and all his folke anone
An easie pace riding, in routes tweine,
Right as his happy day was, soth to seine:
For which men saith, may not distourbed be
That shall betide of necessite.

This Troilus sat on his baie stede
All armed save his head full richely,
And wounded was his horse, and gan to blede,
On which he rode a pace full softely:
But such a knightly sight truely
As was on him, was nat withouten faile
To loke on Mars, that god is of battaile.

So like a man of armes, and a knight
He was to seen, fulfilled of high prowesse,
For both he had a body, and might
To doen that thing, as well as hardinesse,
And eke to seen him in his geare dresse
So freshe, so yong, so weldy semed he,
It was an heaven upon him for to se.

His helme to hewen was in twenty places,
That by a tissue hong, his backe behind,
His shelde to dashed with swerds and with maces,
In which men might many an arowe find,
That thirled had both horn, nerfe, and rind:
And aie the people cried, "Here cometh our joie,
And next his brother, holder up of Troie."

For which he wext a little redde for shame
Whan he so heard the people upon him crien.
That to behold it was a noble game,
How soberliche he cast adoune his eyen:
Creseide anon gan all his chere espien,
And let it so soft in hir herte sinke,
That to her self she said, "Who yave me drinke?"

For all her own thought, she woxe all redde,
Remembring her right thus, "Lo this is he,
Which that mine uncle swereth he mote dedde,
But I on him have mercie and pite:"
And with that thought, for pure ashamed she,
Gan in her hedde to pull, and that as fast,
While he and all the people forth by past.

And gan to cast, and rollen up and doun
Within her thought his excellent prowesse,
And his estate, and also his renoun,
His witte, his shape, and eke his gentilnesse,
But most her favour was, for his distresse
Was all for her, and thought it were a routh,
To slaen soche one, if that he meant trouth.

Now might some envious jangle thus,
"This was a sodain love, how might it be,
That she so lightly loved Troilus?
Right for the first sight: ye, parde?"
Now whoso saied so, mote he never the:
For every thing a ginning hath it nede
Er all be wrought, withouten any drede.

For I saie nat that she so sodainly
Yafe him her love, but that she gan encline
To liken him tho, and I have told you why:
And after that, his manhode, and his pine,
Made that love within her gan to mine:
For which by processe, and by good service
He wanne her love, and in no sodain wise.

And all so blisfull Venus wele araied
Satte in her seventh house of Heven tho,
Disposed wele, and with aspectes payed,
To helpe sely Troilus of his wo:
And sothe to sayne, she n'as nat all a foe
To Troilus, in his natyvyte,
God wote that wele the sooner spede he.

Now let us stente of Troilus a throw,
That rideth forth, and let us tourne fast
Unto Creseide, that heng her hedde full low,
There as she satte alone, and gan to cast
Whereon she would appoint her at the last,
If it so were her eme ne would cesse,
For Troilus upon her for to presse.

And lorde so she gan in her thought argue
In this matter, of which I have you told,
And what to doen best were, and what eschue,
That plited she full oft in many fold:
Now was hir herte warme, now was it cold.
And what she thought, somwhat shall I write,
As mine authour listeth for t'endite.

She thought first, that Tropilus person
She knew by sight and eke his gentelnesse:
And thus she said, "All were it nought to doen
To grant him love, yet for his worthinesse,
It were honor with plaie, and with gladnesse,
In honeste with soch a lorde to deale,
For mine estate, and also for his heale.

"Eke well wote I, my kinges sonne is he,
And sith he hath to see me soch delite,
If I would utterliche his sight flie,
Paraventure he might have me in dispite,
Through which I might stond in wors plite:
Now were I wise, me hate to purchase
Without nede, there I may stande in grace?

"In every thing, I wot there lieth measure:
For though a man forbid dronkennesse,
He nought forbiddeth that every creature
Be drinkelesse for alway, as I gesse:
Eke, sithe I wot for me is his distresse,
I ne ought not for that thing him dispise,
Sith it is so, he meaneth in good wise.

"And eke I know, of long time agone
His thewes good, and that he n'is not nice,
No vauntour saine men, certain he is none,
To wise is he to doen so great a vice:
Ne als I nill him never so cherice,
That he shall make avaunt by just cause:
He shall me never binde in soche a clause.

"Now set a case, the hardest is ywis,
Men might demen that he loveth me:
What dishonour were it unto me this?
Maie iche hem let of that? why naie parde:
I know also, and alway heare and se,
Men loven women all this toune about,
Be they the wers? Why naie withouten dout.

"I thinke eke how, he worthie is to have
Of all this noble toune the thriftiest,
That woman is, if she her honour save:
For out and out he is the worthiest,

Save only Hector, which that is the best,
And yet his life lieth all now in my cure,
But soche is love, and eke mine aventure.

"Ne me to love, a wonder is it nought:
For well wote I my self, so God me spede,
All woll I that no man wist of this thought,
I am one the fairest out of drede
And goodliest, who so that taketh hede:
And so men saine in all the toune of Troie,
What wonder is though he of me have joie!

"I am mine owne woman well at ease,
I thanke it God, as after mine estate,
Right yong, and stond untied in lustie lease,
Withouten jelousie, and such debate:
Shall no husbonde saine to me checke mate,
For either they be full of jelousie,
Or maisterfull, or loven novelrie.

"What shall I doen! to what fine live I thus!
Shall I not love, in case if that me lest!
What pardieux I am not religious:
And though that I mine herte set at rest
Upon this knight, that is the worthiest,
And kepe alway mine honor, and my name,
By all right it may doe me no shame."

But right as whan the Sunne shineth bright
In March, that chaungeth oft time his face,
And that a cloud is put with winde to flight,
Which oversprat the Sunne, as for a space,
A cloudy thought gan through her soul pace,
That overspradde her bright thoughtes all,
So that for feare almost she gan to fall.

That thought was this: Alas sith I am free,
Should I now love, and put in jeopardie
My sikernesse, and thrallen libertie!
Alas, how durst I thinken that folie!
May I not well in other folke aspie
Hir dredfull joie, hir constreint, and hir pain:
Ther loveth none, that she ne hath why to plain.

"For love is yet the moste stormie life,
Right of himself, that ever was begonne:
For ever some mistrust, or nice strife,
There is in love, some cloud over the Sunne:
Thereto we wretched women nothing conne
Whan us is wo, but wepe and sit and thinke,
Our wretch is this, our owne wo to drinke.

Also wicked tongues been ay so prest
To speake us harme: eke men ben so untrue,
That right anon as cessed is hir lest,
So cesseth love, and forth to love a newe:
But harm ydoe is doen, who so it rue:
For though these men for love hem first to rende,
Full sharp beginning breaketh oft at ende.

"How oft time may men both rede and seen,
The treason, that to woman hath be doe!
To what fine is soche love, I can not seen,
Or where becometh it, whan it is go,
There is no wight that wote, I trowe so,
Wher it becometh, lo, no wight on it sporneth;
That erst was nothing, into naught turneth.

"How busie (if I love) eke must I be
To pleasen hem, that jangle of love, and demen,
And coyen hem, that thei saie no harm of me:
For though there be no cause, yet hem semen
Al be for harme, that folke hir frendes quemen:
And who maie stoppen every wicked tong!
Or soune of belles, while that they been rong!"

And after that her thought gan for to clere
And saied, "He which that nothing undertaketh
Nothing acheveth, be him loth or dere;"
And with another thought her herte quaketh
Than slepeth hope, and after drede awaketh,
Now hote, now cold, but thus bitwixen twey
She rist her up, and went hir for to pley.

Adoune the staire anon right tho she went
Into her gardine, with her neces three,
And up and doun, they maden many a went
Flexippe and she, Tarbe, and Antigone,
To plaien, that to joie was to see,
And other of her women a great rout
Her followeth in the gardaine all about.

This yerde was large, and railed al the alies
And shadowed wel, with blosomy bowes grene,
And benched newe, and sonded all the waies
In which she walketh arme in arme betwene,
Till at the last Antigone the shene
Gan on a Troian song to singen clere,
That it an Heven was her voice to here.

She saied, "O Love, to whom I have, and shall
Been humble subject, true in mine entent
As I best can, to you, lorde, yeve iche all
For evermore mine hertes lust to rent:
For never yet thy grace to no wight sent
So blisfull cause as me, my life to lede
In all joie and suretie, out of drede.

"The blisfull god, hath me so well beset
In love ywis, that all that beareth life
Imaginen ne could how to be bet,
For, lorde, withouten jelousie or strife
I love one, which that moste is ententife
To serven well, unwerily or unfained,
That ever was, and lest with harme distained,

"As he that is the well of worthinesse,
Of trouth ground, mirrour of goodlihedde,
Of wit Apollo, stone of sikernesse,
Of vertue roote, of luste finder and hedde,
Through whiche is all sorrowe fro me dedde:
Ywis I love him best, so doeth he me,
Now good thrift have he, where so ever he be.

"Whom should I thanken but you, god of love,
Of all this blisse, in which to bathe I ginne.
And thanked be ye, lorde, for that I love,
This is the right life that I am inne,
To flemen all maner vice and sinne:
This doeth me so to vertue for to entende
That daie by daie I in my will amende.

"And who that saieth that for to love is vice,
Or thraldome, though he fele it in distresse,
He either is envious, or right nice,
Or is unmightie for his shreudnesse,
To loven, for soch maner folke I gesse
Diffamen Love, as nothing of him know
They speaken, but they bent never his bowe.

"What is the Sunne worse of his kind right,
Though that a man, for feblenesse of his eyen
Maie not endure on it to se for bright!
Or love the worst, that wretches on it crien!

No wele is worth, that may no sorowe drien :
And forthy, who that hath an hedde of verre
Fro cast of stones ware him in the werre.

"But I with all mine herte and all my might,
As I have saied, woll love unto my last
My owne dere herte and all mine owne knight,
In whiche mine herte growen is so fast
And his in me, that it shall ever last :
All dredde I first love him to begin,
Now wote I well there is no perill in."

And of her song right with that word she stent,
And therewithall, "Now nece" (quod Creseide)
"Who made this song now with so good entent?"
Antigone answerde anon and saide,
"Madame ywis the goodliest maide
Of great estate in all the toune of Troie
And led her life in most honour and joie."

"Forsothe so semeth it by her song,"
Quod tho Creseide, and gan therewith to sike,
And saied : "Lorde, is there soche blisse emong
These lovers, as they can faire endite :"
"Ye, wisse," quod fresh Antigone the white,
"For all the folke that have or been on live
Ne con well the blisse of love discrive.

"But wene ye that every wretche wote
The parfite blisse of love? why naie ywis :
They wenen all be love, if one be hote :
Do waie do waie, they wote nothing of this.
Men mote asken of sainctes, if it is
Ought faire in Heven, and why? for they can tell,
And aske fendes, if it be foule in Hell."

Creseide unto the purpose naught answerde,
But saied, "Ywis it woll be night as fast,"
But every worde, which that she of her herde,
She gan to printen in her herte fast,
And aie gan love her lasse for to agast
Than it did erst, and sinken in her herte,
That she waxe somewhat able to convarte.

The daies honour, and the Heavens eye,
The nightes foe, all this clepe I thee Sonne,
Gan westren fast, and dounward for to wrie,
As he that had his daies course yronne,
And white thinges woxen al dimme and donne
For lacke of light, and sterres for to apere,
That she and all her folke in went yfere.

So whan it liked her to gon to rest,
And voided weren they that voiden ought,
She saied, that to slepen well her leste :
Her women soue till her bedde her brought :
Whan al was hust, than lay she still and thought
Of all this thing the maner and the wise,
Rehearce it needeth not, for ye been wise.

A nightingale upon a cedre grene
Under the chamber wall, there as she laie,
Full loude song ayen the Mone shene
Paraventure, in his birdes wise, a laie
Of love, that made her herte freshe and gaie,
That herkened she so long in good entent,
Till at the last the dedde sleepe her hent.

And as she slept, anon right tho her met,
How that an egle fethered white as bone,
Under her brest his longe clawes yset,
And out her herte he rent, and that anon,
And did his herte into her brest to gon,
Of which she nought agrose, ne nothing smart,
And forth he flieth, with herte left for herte.

Now let her slepe, and we our tales holde
Of Troilus, that is to paleis ridden,
Fro the scarmishe of which I you tolde,
And in his chamber sate, and hath abidden.
Till two or three of his messengers yeden
For Pandarus, and soughten him full fast,
Till they him found, and brought him at the last.

This Pandarus came leaping in at ones,
And saied thus, "Who hath been well ybete
To day with swerdes, and slong stones,
But Troilus, that hath caught him an hete?"
And gan to jape, and saied, "Lord ye swete,
But rise and let us soupe, and go to reste,"
And he answerde him, "Do we as thee leste."

With all the haste goodly as they might,
They sped hem fro the souper, and to bedde,
And every wight out at the doore him dight,
And whider him list, upon his waie him sped :
But Troilus thought that his herte bledde
For wo, till that he heard some tiding,
And saied, "Frende, shall I now wepe or sing?"

(Quod Pandarus) "Be still and let me slepe,
And doe on thy hoode, thine nedes spedde be,
And chose if thou wolt sing, daunce, or lepe,
At short wordes thou shalt trowe all by me,
Sir, my nece woll doen well by thee,
And love thee best, by God and by trothe,
But lacke of pursute marre it in thy slothe.

"For thus ferforth I have thy werk begon,
Fro daie to daie, till this daie by the morow,
Hir love of frendship have I to thee won,
And therfore hath she laid her faith to borow,
Algate a foote is hameled of thy sorow ;"
What should I lenger sermon of it holde,
As ye have heard before, all he him tolde.

But right as floures through the cold of night
Yclosed, stoupen in hir stalkes lowe,
Redressen hem ayen the Sunne bright,
And spreaden in hir kinde course by rowe,
Right so gan tho his eyen up to throwe
This Troilus, and saied : "O Venus dere,
Thy might, thy grace, yheried be it here."

And to Pandarus he held up both his honds,
And saied, "Lorde all thine be that I have,
For I am hole, and broken been my bonds,
A thousand Troies, who so that me yave
Eche after other, God so wis me save,
Ne might me so gladen, lo mine herte
It spredeth so for joye it woll to starte.

"But lorde how shall I doen? how shal I liven,
Whan shall I next my dere herte se?
How shall this longe time away be driven?
Till that thou be ayen at her fro me,
Thou maist answere, abide, abide : but he
That hangeth by the necke, sothe to saine,
In great disease abideth for the paine."

"All easily now, for the love of Marte,"
(Quod Pandarus) "for every thing hath time,
So long abide, till that the night departe,
For also siker as thou liest here by me,

And God toforne, I woll be there at prime,
And for thy werke somewhat, as I shall say,
Or on some other wight this charge lay.

"For parde, God wot, I have ever yet
Ben ready thee to serve, and this night
Have I not fained, but emforthe my wit
Doen all thy lust, and shal with al my might:
Doe now as I shall saine, and fare aright:
And if thou n'ilte, wite all thy selfe the care,
On me is nought along thine evill fare.

"I wote well, that thou wiser art than I
A thousand fold: but if I were as thou,
God helpe me so, as I would utterly
Right of mine owne honde write her now
A letter, in which I would her tellen how
I farde amisse, and her beseech of routh:
Now help thy self, and leave it for no slouth.

"And I my selfe shall therewith to her gone,
And whan thou wost that I am with her there
Worthe thou upon a courser right anone,
Ye hardely, and that right in thy best gere,
And ride forth by the place, as naught ne were,
And thou shalt find us (if I may) sitting
At some window, into the street looking.

"And if thee list, then mayest thou us salve,
And upon me make thou thy countenaunce,
But by thy life beware, and fast eschue
To tarien ought, God shild us fro mischaunce:
Ride forth thy way, and hold thy governaunce,
And we shall speake of thee somewhat I trow
Whan thou art gone, to doe thine eares glow.

"Touching thy letter, thou art wise inough,
I wot thou n'ilte it deigneliche endite,
As make it with these argumentes tough,
Ne scriveinishe or craftely thou it write,
Beblotte it with thy teares eke alite,
And if thou write a goodly word all soft,
Though it be good, rehearse it not too oft.

"For though the best harpour upon live
Would on the best souned jolly harpe
That ever was, with all his fingers five
Touch aye o string, or aye o warble harpe,
Where his nailes pointed never so sharpe,
It should make every wight to dull,
To heare his glee, and of his strokes full.

"Ne jombre eke no discordaunt thing yfere,
As thus, to usen tearmes of phisicke,
In loves tearmes hold of thy matere
The forme alway, and doe that it be like,
For if a painter would paint a pike
With asses feet, and headed as an ape,
It cordeth not, so were it but a jape."

This counsaile liked well unto Troilus,
But as a dredefull lover he saied this:
"Alas my dere brother Pandarus,
I am ashamed for to write ywis,
Least of mine innocence I saied amis,
Or that she n'olde it for dispite receive,
Than were I dead, there might it nothing weive."

To that Pandare answerde, "If thee lest,
Do that I say, and let me therewith gone,
For by that Lord that formed east and west,
I hope of it to bring answere anone
Right of her hond, and if that thou n'ilte none,
Let be, and sorrie mote he been his live,
Ayenst thy lust that helpeth thee to thrive."

(Quod Troilus) "Depardieux iche assent,
Sith that thee list, I woll arise and write,
And blisfull God pray iche with good entent
The voiage and the letter I shall endite,
So speed it, and thou Minerva the white,
Yeve thou me witte, my letter to devise:"
And set him doun, and wrote right in this wise.

First he gan her his right ladie call,
His hertes life, his lust, his sorowes leche,
His blisse, and eche these other tearmes all,
That in such case ye lovers all seche,
And in full humble wise, as in his speche,
He gan him recommaund unto her grace,
To tell all how, it asketh mokell space.

And after this full lowly he her praied
To be nought wroth, though he of his follie
So hardie was to her to write, and saied
That love it made, or eles must he die,
And pitously gan mercie for to crie:
And after that he saied, and lied full loud,
Himselfe was little worth, and lasse he coud.

And that she would have his conning excused,
That little was, and eke he dradde her so,
And his unworthinesse aye he accused:
And after that than gan he tell his wo,
But that was endlesse withouten ho:
And said, he would in trouth alway him hold,
And redde it over, and gan the letter fold.

And with his salte teares gan he bathe
The rubie in his signet, and it sette
Upon the wexe deliverliche and rathe,
Therewith a thousand times, er he lette,
He kiste tho the letter that he shette
And sayd, "Letter, a blisfull destine
Thee shapen is, my ladie shall thee see."

This Pandare tooke the letter, and betime
A morrow to his neecis pallaice stert,
And fast he swore, that it was passed prime:
And gan to jape, and sayd, "Ywis my herte
So fresh it is, although it sore smert,
I may not sleepe never a Mayes morrow,
I have a jollie woe, a lustie sorrow."

Creseide whan that she her uncle heard,
With dreadfull herte, and desirous to heare,
The cause of his comming, thus answeard,
"Now by your faith, mine uncle" (quod she) "deare,
What manner windes guideth you now here?
Tell us your jolly woe, and your penaunce,
How farre forth be ye put in loves daunce."

"By God" (quod he) "I hop alway behinde,"
And to laugh, it thought her herte brest,
(Quod Pandarus) "Looke alway that ye finde
Game in mine hood: but herkeneth if you lest,
There is right now come into the toun a gest,
A Greeke espie, and telleth newe thinges,
For which I come to tell you new tidinges.

"Into the garden go we, and ye shall heare
All privily of this a long sermoun:"
With that they wenten arm in arm yfere,
Into the gardin fro the chamber doun.

And whan he was so farre, that the soun
Of that he spake, no man heren might,
He sayd her thus, and out the letter plight.

" Lo, he that is all hooly yours free,
Him recommaundeth lowly to your grace,
And sent you this letter here by me,
Aviseth you on it, whan ye han space,
And of some goodly answeare you purchace,
Or helpe me God so, plainely for to saine,
He may not longe liven for his paine.

Full dredefully tho gan she stonde still,
And tooke it not, but all her humble chere
Gan for to chaunge, and sayd, " Scripe nor bill,
For love of God, that toucheth such matere
Ne bring me none: and also, uncle dere,
To mine estate have more regard I pray
Than to his lust, what should I more say.

" And looketh now if this be reasonable,
And letteth not for favour ne for slouth
To sain a sooth, now is it covenable
To mine estate, by God and by my trouth
To take it, or to have of him routh,
In harming of my selfe or in repreve:
Beare it ayen, for him that ye on leve."

This Pandarus gan on her for to stare,
And sayd, " Now is this the greatest wonder
That ever I saw, let be this nice fare,
To death mote I smiten be with thunder,
If for the citie which that stondeth yonder,
Would I a letter unto you bring or take,
To harm of you: what list you thus it make.

" But thus ye faren well nigh all and some,
That he that most desireth you to serve,
Of him ye retch least where he become,
And whether that he live, or else sterve:
But for all that, that ever I may deserve,
Refuse it not" (quod he) and hent her fast,
And in her bosome the letter doune he thrast.

And said her, " Now cast it away anon
That folk may seen, and gauren on us twey."
(Quod she) " I can abide till they be gon"
And gan to smile, and said him, " Eme I pray
Such answere as you list your selfe purvey:
For truely I woll no letter write:"
" No, than woll I" (quod he) " so ye endite."

Therewith she lough, and said " Go we dine,"
And he gan at himselfe japen fast,
And sayd, " Nece, I have so great a pine
For love, that everich other day I fast,"
And gan his best japes forth to cast,
And made her for to laugh at his follie,
That she for laughter wende for to die.

And whan that she was comen into the hall,
" Now eme" (quod she) " we woll go dine anon,"
And gan some of her women to her call,
And streight into her chamber gan she gone,
But of her businesse this was one,
Amonges other thinges, out of drede,
Full prively this letter for to rede.

Avised word by word in every line,
And found no lacke, she thought he coud his good,
And up it put, and went her in to dine,
And Pandarus, that in a studie stood,
Ere he was ware, she tooke him by the hood,
And said " Ye were caught ere that ye wist,"
" I vouchsafe," (quod he) " do what you list."

Tho weshen they, and set hem doun and ete,
And after noone fall slightly Pandarus
Gan draw him to the window nye the strete,
And said, " Nece, who hath araied thus
The yonder house, that stant aforeyene us?"
" Which house?" (quod she) and gan for to behold,
And knew it well, and whose it was him told.

And fellen forth in speech of thinges smale,
And saten in the window both twey:
Whan Pandarus saw time unto his tale,
And saw well that her folke were all awey:
" Now nece mine, tell on" (quod he) " I prey,
How liketh you the letter that ye wot,
Can he thereon .or by my trouth I n'ot."

Therewith all rosy hewed tho woxe she,
And gan to hum, and said, " So I trowe,"
" Aquite him well for Gods love" (quod he)
" My selfe to medes woll the letter sowe,"
And held his hondes up, and sat on knowe,
" Now good nece, be it never so lite,
Yeve me the labour, it to sowe and plite."

" Ye, for I can so writen" (quod she) " tho,
And eke I n'ot what I should to him say:"
" Nay nece" (quod Pandare) " say not so,
Yet at the least, thonketh him I pray
Of his good will: O, doth him not to dey,
Now for the love of me my nece dere,
Refuseth not at this time my praiere."

" Depardieux" (quod she) " God leve all be wele,
God helpe me so, this is the first letter
That ever I wrote, ye all or any dele,"
And into a closet for to avise her better,
She went alone, and gan her herte unfetter
Out of disdaines prison, but a lite,
And set her doune, and gan a letter write.

Of which to tell in short is mine entent
Theffect, as ferre as I can understond:
She thonked him, of all that he well ment,
Towardes her, but holden him in hond
She n'olde not, ne make her selven bond
In love, but as his suster him to please,
She would aye faine to done his herte an ease.

She shette it, and to Pandare into gone
There as he sat, and looked into strete,
And doune she set her by him on a stone
Of jasper, upon a quisshen of gold ybete,
And said, " As wisely helpe me God the grete,
I never did a thing with more paine,
Than write this, to which ye me restraine."

And tooke it him: he thonked hir, and seide,
" God wot of thing full often lothe begonne
Commeth end good: and nece mine Creseide,
That ye to him of hard now ben ywonne,
Ought he be glad, by God and yonder sonne:
For why, men saith impressiones light
Full lightly ben aye readie to the flight.

" But ye han plaied the tiraunt all too long,
And hard was it your herte for to grave,
Now stint, that ye no lenger on it hong,
All woulden ye the forme of daunger save,

But hasteth you to done him joye have :
For trusteth well, too long ydone hardnesse
Causeth dispite full often for distresse."

And right as they declared this matere,
Lo Troilus, right at the stretes end
Came riding with his tenth somme yfere
All softely, and thiderward gan bend
There as they sate, as was his way to wend
To paleis ward, and Pandare him aspide,
And said, " Nece, ysee who commeth here ride."

" O flie not in, he seeth us I suppose,
Least he may thinken that ye him eschue."
" Nay, nay" (quod she) and woxe as red as rose,
With that he gan her humbly salue
With dredefull chere, and oft his hewes mue,
And up his looke debonairely he cast,
And becked on Pandare, and forth by past.

God wot if he sat on his horse aright,
Or goodly was beseene that ilke day,
God wot where he were like a manly knight,
What should I dretche, or tell of his array :
Creseide, which that all those thinges sey ;
To tell in short, her liked all yfere,
His person, his aray, his looke, his chere.

His goodly manner, and his gentillesse,
So well, that never sith that she was borne,
Ne had she suche routh of his distresse,
And how so, she hath hard ben here beforne,
To God hope I, she hath now caught a thorn,
She shall nat pull it out this next wike,
God send her mo such thornes on to pike.

Pandare, which that stood her faste by,
Felt iron hot, and he began to smite,
And said, " Nece, I pray you heartely,
Tell me that I shall asken you alite,
A woman that were of his death to wite
Withouten his gilt, but for her lack of routh,
Were it well done ?" (quod she) " Nay by my trouth."

" God helpe me so" (quod he) " ye say me sooth,
Ye feelen well your selfe that I nought lie,
Lo, yonde he rideth :" (quod she) " Ye so he dooth :"
" Well" (quod Pandare) " as I have told you thrie,
Let be your nice shame, and your follie,
And speake with him in easing of his herte,
Let nicete nat do you bothe smert."

But thereon was to heaven and to done,
Considering all thing, it may nat be,
And why ? for shame, and it were eke too soone,
To graunten him so great a liberte :
For plainly her entent, as (said she)
Was for to love him unwist, if she might,
And guerdon him with nothing but with sight.

But Pandare thought, it shall nat be so,
If that I may, this nice opinion
Shall nat ben holden fully yeares two.
What should I make of this a long sermon ?
He must assent on that conclusion,
As for the time, and whan that it was eve,
And all was well, he rose and tooke his leve.

And on his way fast homeward he spedde,
And right for joy he felt his herte daunce,
And Troilus he found alone abedde,
That lay, as done these lovers in a traunce,
Betwixen hope and derke desperaunce,
But Pandare, right at his incomming,
He song, as who saith, " Lo, somewhat I bring."

And said, " Who is in his bedde so soone
Yburied thus ?" " It am I friend :" (quod he)
" Who, Troilus ? nay, help me so the Moone"
(Quod Pandarus) " thou shalt up rise and see
A charme that was sent right now to thee,
The which can healen thee of thine accesse,
If thou do forthwith all thy businesse."

" Ye, through the might of God :" (quod Troilus)
And Pandarus gan him the letter take,
And said, " Parde God hath holpen us,
Have here a light, and look on all these blake."
But often gan the herte glad and quake
Of Troilus, while he it gan to rede,
So as the wordes yave him hope or drede.

But finally he tooke all for the best
That she him wrote, for somewhat he beheld,
On which he thought he might his herte rest,
All covered she the wordes under sheld,
Thus to the more worthy part he held,
That what for hope, and Pandarus behest,
His greate wo foryede he at the lest.

But as we may all day our selven see,
Through wood or cole kindleth the more fire,
Right so encrease of hope, of what it be,
Therewith full oft encreaseth eke desire,
Or as an oke commeth of a little spire,
So through this letter, which that she him sent,
Encreasen gan desire of which he brent.

Wherfore I say alway, that day and night
This Troilus gan to desiren more
Than he did erst through hope, and did his might
To presen on, as by Pandarus lore,
And writen to her of his sorowes sore
Fro day to day, he let it nought refreide,
That by Pandare he somewhat wrot or seide.

And did also his other observaunces,
That till a lover longeth in this caas,
And after as his dice turned on chaunces,
So was he either glad, or said alas,
And held after his gestes aye his paas,
And after such answeres as he had,
So were his daies sorry either glad.

But to Pandare alway was his recours,
And pitously gan aye on him to plaine,
And him besought of rede, and some socours,
And Pandarus, that saw his wood paine,
Wext well nigh dead for routh, sooth to saine,
And busily with all his herte cast,
Some of his wo to sleen, and that as fast.

And said, " Lord and friend, and brother dere,
God wot that thy disease doth me wo,
But wolt thou stinten all this wofull chere,
And by my trouth, ere it be daies two,
And God toforne, yet shall I shape it so,
That thou shalt come into a certaine place,
There as thou maist thy self praien her of grace.

" And certainly I n'ot if thou it wost,
But they that ben expert in love, it say,
It is one of these thinges forthereth most,
A man to have a leiser for to pray,

And siker place, his wo for to bewray,
For in good herte it mote some routh impress
To heare and see the guiltless in distresse.

" Peraventure thinkest thou, though it be so,
That Kind would her done for to begin,
To have a manner routh upon my wo,
Saith Daunger nay, thou shalt me never win :
So ruleth her hertes ghost within,
That though she bende, yet she stont on rote,
What in effect is this unto my bote.

" Think here ayen, whan that the sturdy oke
On which men hacketh ofte for the nones,
Received hath the happy falling stroke,
The great swight doth it come all at ones,
As done these great rocks or these miln stones,
For swifter course cometh thing that is of wight
Whan it discendeth, than done thinges light.

" But rede that boweth doun for every blast,
Full lightly cesse wind, it woll arise,
But so n'ill not an oke, whan it is cast,
It needeth me nought longe thee forvise,
Men shall rejoysen of a great emprise,
Atchieved well, and stant withouten dout,
All have men ben the lenger thereabout.

" But, Troilus, now tell me if thee lest
A thing, which that I shall asken thee,
Which is thy brother, that thou lovest best,
As in thy very hertes privite ? "
" Ywis my brother Deiphebus tho " (quod he.)
" Now " (quod Pandare) " ere houres twise twelve,
He shall the ease, unwist of it himselve.

" Now let me alone, and worken as I may,"
(Quod he) and to Deiphebus went he tho,
Which had his lord, and great friend ben aye,
Save Troilus no man he loved so :
To tellen in short withouten words mo
(Quod Pandarus) " I pray you that ye be
Friend to a cause, which that toucheth me."

" Yes parde " (quod Deiphebus) " wel thou wotest
All that ever I may, and God tofore,
All n'ere it but for the man I love most,
My brother Troilus ; but say wherefore
It is, for sith the day that I was bore,
I n'as, ne never mo to ben I thinke,
Ayenst a thing that might thee forthinke."

Pandare gan him thank, and to him seide,
" Lo sir, I have a lady in this toun
That is my nece, and called is Creseide,
Which some men would done oppressioun,
And wrongfully have her possessioun,
Wherefore I of your lordship you beseech
To ben our friend, withouten more speech."

Deiphebus him answerd : " O, is nat this
That thou speakest of to me thus straungly,
Creseide my friend ? " He said him " Yes."
" Than needeth " (quod Deiphebus) " hardely
No more of this to speke, for trusteth well that I
Woll be her champion with spore and yerde,
I ne raught nat though all her foes it herde.

" But tel me how, for thou wost this matere,
I might best availen, now lette see ? "
(Quod Pandarus) " If ye my lord so dere
Woulden as now do this honour to me,
To praien her to morrow, lo that she
Came unto you, her plaints to devise,
Her adversaries would of it agrise.

" And if I more durst praien as now,
And chargen you to have so great travaile,
To have some of your brethren here with you,
That mighten to her cause bet availe,
Than wote I well she might never faile
For to ben holpen, what at your instaunce,
What with her other friendes governaunce."

Deiphebus, which that comen was of kind
To all honour and bounty to consent,
Answerd, " It shall be done : and I can find
Yet greater helpe to this mine entent :
What woldest thou saine, if for Heleine I sent
To speake of this ? I trow it be the best,
For she may leden Paris as her lest.

" Of Hector, which that is my lord my brother,
It needeth nat to praien him friend to be,
For I have heard him o time and eke other
Speaken of Creseide such honour, that he
May saine no bet, such hap to him hath she,
It needeth nat his helpes more to crave,
He shall be such, right as we woll him have.

" Speake thou thy selfe also to Troilus
On my behalfe, and pray him with us dine."
" Sir all this shall be done " (quod Pandarus)
And tooke his leave, and never gan to fine,
But to his neces house as streight as line
He came, and found her fro the meat arise,
And set him doun, and spake right in this wise :

He said, " O very God, so have I ronne,
Lo nece mine, see ye nat how I swete ?
I n'ot where ye the more thanke me conne :
Be ye not ware how false Poliphete
Is now about eftsoones for to plete,
And bring on you advocacies new ? "
" I, no " (quod she) and chaunged all her hew.

" What, is he more about me to dretche
And done me wrong, what shall I done, alas,
Yet of himselfe nothing would I retche,
N'ere it for Antenor and Eneas,
That ben his friends in such manner caas :
But for the love of God mine uncle dere,
No force of that, let him have all yfere,

" Withouten that, I have ynough for us."
" Nay " (quod Pandare) " it shall nothing be so,
For I have been right now at Deiphebus,
At Hector, and mine other lordes mo,
And shortly maked each of hem his fo,
That by my thrift he shall it never win,
For aught he can, whan so that he begin."

And as they casten what was best to done,
Deiphebus of his owne courtesie
Came her to pray, in his proper persone,
To hold him on the morrow companie
At dinner, which she n'olde not denie,
But goodly gan to his prayer obey,
He thonked her, and went upon his wey.

Whan this was done, this Pandare anone,
To tell in short, forth he gan to wend
To Troilus, as still as any stone,
And all this thing he told him word and end,

And how that he Deiphebus gan to blend,
And said him, "Now is time of that ye conne
To bere thee well to morow, and all is wonne.

"Now speke, now pray, now pitously complain,
Let nat for nice shame, for drede or slouth,
Sometime a man mote tell his owne pain,
Beleeve it, and she woll have on thee routh,
Thou shalt ben saved by thy faith in trouth,
But well wot I, thou now art in a drede,
And what it is, I lay that I can arede.

"Thou thinkest now, 'How should I don al this,
For by my cheres mosten folke espie,
That for her love is that I fare amis,
Yet had I lever unwist for sorrow die:'
Now thinke nat so, for thou hast great follie,
For I right now have founden a manere
Of sleight, for to coveren all thy chere.

"Thou shalt gone overnight, and that bilive,
Unto Deiphebus house, as thee to play,
Thy maladie away the bet to drive,
For which thou seemeth sicke, sooth to say,
Soone after that, in thy bed thee lay,
And say thou maist no lenger up endure,
And lie right there, and bide thine aventure.

"Say that thy fever is wont thee for to take
The same time, and last till a morow,
And let see now how well thou canst it make:
For parde sicke is he that is in sorrow.
Go now farwell, and Venus here to borow,
I hope and thou this purpose hold ferme,
Thy grace she shall fully there conferme."

(Quod Troilus) "Ywis thou all needlesse
Counsailest me, that sickeliche I me faine,
For I am sicke in earnest doubtlesse,
So that well nigh I sterve for the paine:"
(Quod Pandarus) "Thou shalt the better plaine,
And hast the lesse need to counterfete,
For him demeth men hot, that seeth him swete.

"Lo, hold thee at thy triste close, and I
Shall well the deere unto the bow drive:"
Therewith he tooke his leave all softly,
And Troilus to his paleis went blive,
So glad ne was he never in all his live,
And to Pandarus rede gan all assent,
And to Deiphebus hous at night he went.

What nedeth it you to tellen all the chere
That Deiphebus unto his brother made,
Or his axis, or his sickeliche manere,
How men gone him with clothes for to lade,
Whan he was laid, and how men would him glade:
But all for nought, he held forth aye the wise,
That ye han heard Pandare ere this devise.

But certaine is, ere Troilus him leide,
Deiphebus had praied him over night
To ben a friend, and helping to Creseide:
God wot that he graunted anon right
To ben her full friend, with all his might:
But such a need was it to praien him thenne,
As for to bidden a wood man to renne.

The morow came, and nighen gan the time
Of mealtide, that the faire queene Heleine
Shope her to ben an houre after the prime
With Deiphebus, to whom she n'olde faine,
But as his suster, homely sooth to saine
She came to dinner in her plaine entent,
But God and Pandare wist all what this ment.

Came eke Creseide all innocent of this,
Antigone her nece, and Tarbe also,
But flie we now prolixitie best is,
For love of God, and let us fast go
Right to theffect, withouten tales mo,
Why all this folke assembled in this place,
And let us of all hir salvinges pace.

Great honour did hem Deiphebus certaine,
And fedde hem well, with all that might like,
But evermo alas, was his refraine:
"My good brother Troilus the sike,
Lithe yet," and therewithall he gan to sike
And after that he pained him to glade
Hem as he might, and chere good he made.

Complained eke Heleine of his sicknesse
So faithfully, that it pitie was to here,
And every wight gan wexen for axes
A leche anon, and said, "In this manere
Men curen folke, this charme I wol thee lere,"
But there sate one, all list her nat to teche,
That thought, yet best could I ben his leche.

After complaint him gonnen they to preise,
As folk don yet whan some wight hath begon
To preise a man, and with preise him reise
A thousand fold yet higher than the Sonne,
He is, he can, that few other lordes conne,
And Pandarus of that they would afferme,
He nought forgate hir praising to conferme.

Herd all this thing fair Creseide well enough,
And every word gan for to notifie,
For which with sober chere her herte lough,
For who is that ne would her glorifie,
To mowen such a knight done live or die?
But all passe I, least ye too long ydwell,
But for o fine is all that ever I tell.

The time came, fro dinner for to rise,
And as hem ought, arisen everychone,
And gane a while of this and that devise,
But Pandarus brake all this speech anone,
And said to Deiphebus, "Woll ye gone,
If your will be, as erst I you preide,
To speaken of the nedes of Creseide?"

Heleine, which that by the hond her held,
Tooke first the tale, and said, "Go we blive,"
And goodly on Creseide she beheld,
And said, "Joves let him never thrive
That doth you harm, and reve him sone of live,
And yeve me sorrow, but he shall it rue,
If that I may, and all folke be true."

"Tell thou thy nieces case" (quod Deiphebus
To Pandarus) "for thou canst best it tell."
"My lordes and my ladies, it stant thus,
What should I lenger" (quod he) "do you dwell?"
He rong hem out a proces like a bell
Upon her foe, that hight Poliphete,
So hainous, that men might on it spete.

Answerd of this ech worse of hem than other,
And Poliphete they gonnen thus to warien,
And honged be such one, were he my brother,
And so he shall, for it ne may nought varien,

What should I lenger in this tale tarien,
Plaineliche all at ones they her highten
To ben her friend in all that ever they mighten.

Spake then Heleine, and said, "Pandarus,
Wot aught my lord my brother of this mater,
I meane Hector, or wote it Troilus!"
He said, "Ye, but woll ye me now here,
Me thinketh thus, sith that Troilus is here,
It were good, if that ye would assent,
She told him her selfe all this ere she went.

"For he wol have the more hir grefe at herte,
Because lo, that she a lady is,
And by your will, I woll but in right start,
And do you wete, and that anone ywis,
If that he sleepe, or woll aught here of this:"
And in he lept, and said him in his ere,
"God have thy soul, for brought have I thy bere."

To smilen of this gan tho Troilus,
And Pandarus without reckoning,
Out went anon to Heleine and Deiphebus,
And said hem, "So there be no tarying
Ne more prease, he woll well that ye bring
Creseide my lady, that is now here,
And as he may enduren, he woll her here.

"But well ye wote, the chamber is but lite,
And few folke may lightly make it warme,
Now looketh ye, for I woll have no wite
To bring in prease, that might done him harme,
Or him diseasen, for my better arme:
Yet were it bette she bid till oft soonis,
Now looke ye that knowen what to don is.

"I say for me best is, as I can know,
That no wight in ne wende, but ye twey,
But it were I, for I cannot in a throw
Rehearse her case, unlike that she can sey,
And after this she may him ones prey
To ben good lord in short, and take her leve,
This may not mokell of his ease him reve.

"And eke for she is straunge, he woll forbere
His ease, which that him dare nat for you,
Eke other thing, that toucheth nat to her,
He woll it tell, I wote it well right now,
That secret is, and for the townes prow:"
And they that knew nothing of his entent,
Without more, to Troilus in they went.

Heleine in all her goodly softe wise
Gan him salue, and womanly to play,
And saied, "Ywis, ye mote algate arise:
Now faire brother be all hole I pray,"
And gan her arme right over his shoulder lay,
And him with all her wit to recomfort,
As she best could, she gan him to disport.

So after this (quod she) "We you beseke
My dere brother Deiphebus and I,
For love of God, and so doeth Pandare eke,
To been good lord and friend right hertely
Unto Creseide, which that certainly
Received wrong, as wot well here Pandare,
That can her case well bet than I declare."

This Pandarus gan new his tong affile,
And all her case rehearse, and that anone,
Whan it was saied, soone after in a while,
(Quod Troilus) "As soone as I was gone,
I wol right faine with all my might ben one,
Have God my trouth, her cause to susteine."
"Now good thrift have ye" (quod Helein the queen.)

(Quod Pandarus) "And it your will be,
That she may take her leave ere that she go."
"O eles God forbid it tho" (quod he)
"If that she vouchsafe for to do so:"
And with that word (quod Troilus) "ye two
Deiphebus, and my suster lefe and dere,
To you have I to speake of a matere,

"To been avised by your rede the better,"
And found (as hap was) at his bedes hedde
The copie of a treatise, and a letter
That Hector had him sent, to asken rede
If such a man was worthy to ben dede,
Wote I naught who, but in a grisly wise
He prayed hem anone on it avise.

Deiphebus gan this letter for to unfold
In earnest great, so did Heleine the queene,
And roming outward, fast it gonne behold
Dounward a steire, into an herbor greene:
This ilke thing they redden hem betwene,
And largely the mountenaunce of an houre
They gonne on it to reden and to poure.

Now let hem rede, and tourne we anone
To Pandarus, that gan full soft prie
That all was well, and out he gan to gone
Into the great chamber, and that in hie,
And saied, "God save all this companie:
Come nece mine, my lady queene Heleine
Abideth you, and eke my lordes tweine.

"Rise, take with you your nece Antigone,
Or whom you list, or no force hardely,
The lasse prease the bet, come forth with me,
And looke that ye thonked humbly
Hem all three, and whan ye may goodly
Your time ysee, taketh of hem your leave,
Least we too long his restes him bireave."

All innocent of Pandarus entent
(Quod tho Creseide) "Go we uncle dere,"
And arme in arme, inward with him she went,
Avising well her wordes and her chere,
And Pandarus in earnestfull manere,
Saied, "All folke for Godes love I pray,
Stinteth right here, and softely you play.

"Aviseth you what folke ben here within,
And in what plite one is, God him amend,
And inward thou full softely begin,
Nece I conjure, and highly you defend
On his halfe, which that soule us all send,
And in the vertue of corounes twaine
Slea nat this man, that hath for you this paine.

"Fie on the devill, thinke which one he is,
And in what plite he lieth, come off anone,
Think all such taried tide but lost it n'is,
That woll ye both saine, whan ye been one:
Secondly, there yet divineth none
Upon you two, come off now if ye conne,
While folke is blent, lo, all the time is wonne.

"In titering and pursuite, and delaies
The folke divine, at wegging of a stre,
And though ye would han after merry daies,
Than dare ye nat, and why? For she and she

Spake such a word, thus looked he and he :
Least time be lost, I dare not with you deale,
Come off therfore, and bringeth him to heale."

But now to you, ye lovers that ben here,
Was Troilus nat in a cankedort,
That lay, and might the wispring of hem here,
And thoght " O lord, right now renneth my sort
Fully to die, or have anone comforte,"
And was the first time he should her pray
Of love, O mightie God, what shall he say !

EXPLICIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

PROEME.

B. III. V. 1—105.

O BLISFULL light, of which the bemes clere
Adorneth all the third heaven faire,
O sonnes lefe, O Joves doughter dere,
Pleasaunce of love, O goodly debonaire,
In gentle hertes aye ready to repaire,
O very cause of heale and of gladnesse,
Yheried be thy might and thy goodnesse.

In Heaven and Hell, in earth, and salt see,
Is felt thy might, if that I well discerne,
As man, and beast, fish, herbe, and grene tree,
They fele in times with vapour eterne,
God loveth, and to love woll naught werne,
And in this world no lives creature,
Withouten love is worth, or may endure.

Ye Joves first, to thilke affectes glade
Through which that thinges liven all and be,
Commenden, and amorous hem made
On mortall thing, and as you list aye ye
Yeve hem in love, ease, or adversite :
And in a thousand formes doune hem sent
For love in earth, and whom you list he hent.

Ye fiers Mars appeasen of his ire,
And as you list, ye maken hertes digne :
Algates hem that ye woll set a fire,
They dreden shame, and vices they resigne,
Ye doen him curteis be, fresh, and benigne,
And high or low, after a wight entendeth
The joies that he hath, your might it sendeth.

Ye holden reigne and house in unitie,
Ye soothfast cause of friendship ben also
Ye knowen all thilke covered qualitie
Of thinges, which that folke wondren at so,
Whan they can nat construe how it may go,
She loveth him, or why he loveth here,
As why this fish, and nat that commeth to were.

Ye folke a law have set in universe,
And this know I by hem that lovers be,
That who so striveth with you hath the werse :
Now ladie bright, for thy benignite,
At reverence of hem that serven thee,
Whose clerke I am, so teacheth me devise,
Some joy of that is felt in thy servise.

Yea, in my naked herte sentement
In hilde, and do me shew of thy sweetnesse
Caliope, thy voice be now present,
For now is need, seest thou nat my distresse,
How I mote tell anon right the gladnesse
Of Troilus, to Venus herying,
To the which who nede hath, God him bring.

INCIPIT LIBER TERTIUS.

LAY all this meane while this Troilus
Recording his lesson in this manere,
" Mafey," thought he, " thus woll I say, and thus
Thus woll I plaine unto my lady dere,
That word is good, and this shall be my chere
This n'ill I nat foryetten in no wise,"
God leve him werken as he can devise.

And lord so that his herte gan to quappe,
Hearing her come, and short for to sike,
And Pandarus that ledde her by the lappe,
Came nere, and gan in at the curtein pike,
And saied, " God doe bote on all that are sike,
See who is here you comen to visite,
Lo, here is she that is your death to wite."

Therewith it seemed as he wept almost,
" A, a " (quod Troilus so routhfully)
" Whether me be wo, O mighty god thou wost,
Who is all there, I see nat truely : "
" Sir," (quod Creseide) " it is Pandare and I"
" Ye sweet herte alas, I may nat rise
To kneele, and do you honour in some wise."

And dressed him upward, and she right tho
Gan both her hondes soft upon him ley,
" O for the love of God doe ye not so
To me," (quod she) " eye what is this to sey ?
Sir comen am I to you for causes twey,
First you to thonke, and of your lordship eke
Continuaunce I would you beseke."

This Troilus that heard his ladie pray
Of lordship, him wox neither quick ne dedde,
Ne might o word for shame to it say,
Although men shoulden smiten off his hedde,
But Lord so he wox sodaineliche redde :
And sir, his lesson that he wende conne
To praien her, is through his wit yronne.

Creseide all this aspied well ynough,
For she was wise, and loved him never the lasse,
All nere he in all apert, or made it tough,
Or was too bold to sing a foole a masse,
But whan his shame gan somwhat to passe
His reasons, as I may my rimes hold,
I woll you tell, as teachen bookes old.

In chaunged voice, right for his very drede,
Which voice eke quoke, and thereto his manere
Goodly abasht, and now his hewes rede,
Now pale, unto Creseide his ladie dere,
With looke doun cast, and humble iyolden chere,
Lo, the alderfirst word that him astart,
Was twice, " Mercy, mercy, O my sweet herte."

And stint a while, and whan he might out bring,
The next word was, " God wote for I have
As faithfully as I have had konning,
Ben yours all, God so my soule do save,
And shall, till that I wofull might be grave,
And though I dare ne can unto you plaine,
Ywis I suffer not the lasse paine.

"Thus much as now, ah, womanliche wife,
I may out bring, and if this you displease,
That shall I wreke upon mine owne life
Right soone I trow, and do your herte an ease,
If with my death your herte may appease:
But sens that ye han heard me somewhat sey,
Now retch I never how soone that I dey."

Therewith his manly sorrow to behold,
It might have made an herte of stone to rew,
And Pandare wept as he to water would,
And poked ever his nece new and new,
And saied, "Wo begon been hertes true,
For love of God, make of this thing an end,
Or slea us both at ones, ere that ye wend."

"I, what" (quod she) "by God and by my trouth
I n'ot nat what ye wilne that I sey:"
"Ey, what" (quod he) "that ye have on him routh
For Goddes love, and doeth him nat to dey:"
"Now than thus" (quod she) "I woll him prey,
To tell me the fine of his entent,
Yet wist I never well what that he ment."

"What that I mean, O my sweet herte dere"
(Quod Troilus) "O goodly fresh and free,
That with the streames of your eyen so clere
Ye shoulden sometime friendly on me see,
And than agreen that I may ben hee
Withouten braunch of vice, on any wise,
In trouth alway to do you my servise,

"As to my lady right, and cheefe resort,
With all my witte and all my diligence,
And to have right as you list comfort,
Under your yerde egall to mine offence,
As death, if that I breake your defence,
And that ye digne me so much honour,
Me to commaunden aught in any hour.

"And I to ben your very humble, true,
Secret, and in my paines patient,
And ever to desiren freshly new
To serven, and to ben aye like diligent,
And with good herte all hooly your talent
Receiven well, how sore that me smart,
Lo this meane I, O mine owne sweet herte."

(Quod Pandarus) "Lo, here an hard request,
And reasonable, a lady for to werne:
Now nece mine, by Natall Joves feest,
Were I a God, ye should sterve as yerne,
That heren wel this man wol nothing yerne,
But your honour, and seene him almost sterve,
And ben so loth to suffer him you to serve."

With that she gan her eyen on him cast
Full easily, and full debonairely
Avising her, and hied not too fast,
With never a word, but saied him softely,
"Mine honour safe, I woll well truely,
And in such forme, as I can now devise,
Receiven him fully to my servise.

"Beseeching him for Goddes love, that he
Would in honour of trouth and gentillesse,
As I well meane, eke meanen well to me:
And mine honour with wit and businesse
Aye kepe, and if I may doen him gladnesse
From henceforth ywis I n'ill not faine:
Now beth all hole, no lenger ye ne plaine.

"But nathelesse, this warne I you" (quod she)
"A kinges sonne although ye be ywis,
Ye shall no more have soverainte
Of me in love, than right in that case is,
Ne n'ill forbeare if that ye doen amis
To wrath you, and while that ye me serve,
Cherishen you, right after that ye deserve.

"And shortly, dere herte and all my knight,
Beth glad, and draweth you to lustinesse,
And I shall truely, withall my full might
You bitter tournen all to sweetnesse,
If I be she that may doe you gladnesse,
For every wo ye shall recover a blisse,"
And him in armes tooke, and gan him kisse.

Fell Pandarus on knees, and up his eyen
To Heaven threw, and held his hondes hie:
"Immortall God" (quod he) "that maiest not dien,
Cupide I meane, of this maiest glorifie,
And Venus, thou maiest maken melodie
Withouten hond, me seemeth that in toune,
For this miracle iche here eche bell soune.

"But ho, no more now of this mattere,
For why? This folke woll comen up anone,
That have the letter redde, lo, I hem here,
But I conjure thee Creseide, and one
And two, thou Troilus whan thou maist gone
That at mine house ye hen at my warning,
For I full well shall shapen your comming.

"And easeth there your hertes right ynough,
And let see which of you shall beare the bell
To speak of love aright," and therwith he lough,
"For there have I a leiser for to tell:"
(Quod Troilus) "how long shall I here dwell
Ere this be doen?" (quod he) "Whan thou maiest rise
This thing shall be right as you list devise."

With that Heleine and also Deiphebus
Tho comen upward right at the staires end,
And lord so tho gan gronen Troilus,
His mother and his suster for to blend:
(Quod Pandarus) "It time is that we wend,
Take nece mine your leave at hem all three,
And let hem speak, and commeth forth with me."

She tooke her leave at hem full thriftely,
As she well could, and they her reverence
Unto the full didden hartely,
And wonder well speaken in her absence
Of her, in praising of her excellence,
Her governaunce, her wit, and her manere
Commendeden, that it joy was to here.

Now let her wend unto her owne place,
And tourne we unto Troilus againe,
That gan full lightly of the letter pace,
That Deiphebus had in the garden seine,
And of Heleine and him he would feine
Delivered ben, and saied, that him lest
To slepe, and after tales have a rest.

Heleine him kist, and tooke her leave blive,
Deiphebus eke, and home went every wight,
And Pandarus as fast as he may drive
To Troilus tho came, as line right,
And on a paillet, all that glad night
By Troilus he lay, with merry chere
To tale, and well was hem they were yfere.

Whan every wight was voided but they two,
And all the dores weren fast yshet,
To tell in short, withouten words mo,
This Pandarus, without any let
Up rose, and on his beddes side him set,
And gan to speaken in a sober wise
To Troilus, as I shall you devise.

"Mine alderlevest lord, and brother dere,
God wot, and thou, that it sate me so sore,
Whan I thee saw so languishing to here,
For love of which thy wo woxe alway more,
That I with all my might, and all my lore,
Have ever sithen doen my businesse
To bring thee to joye out of distresse.

"And have it brought to such plite as thou wost
So that through me thou stondest now in way
To faren well, I say it for no bost,
And wost thou why, but shame it is to say,
For thee have I begon a gamen play,
Which that I never doen shall eft for other,
All tho he were a thousand fold my brother.

"That is to say, for thee am I becomen,
Betwixen game and earnest such a meane,
As maken women unto men to comen,
All say I nat, thou wost well what I meane,
For thee have I my nece, of vices cleane,
So fully made thy gentillesse trist,
That all shall ben right as thy selfe list.'

"But God, that all woteth, take I to witnesse,
That never I this for covetise wrought,
But only for to abredge that distresse,
For which welnie thou didest, as me thought:
But good brother do now as thee ought,
For Godes love, and kepe her out of blame,
Sins thou art wise, and save alway her name.

"For well thou wost, the name as yet of her
Emongs the people as (who saith) halowed is.
For that man is unbore I dare well swere,
That ever wist that she did amis,
But wo is me, that I that cause all this
May thinken that she is my nece dere,
And I hir eme, and traitour eke yfere.

"And wer it wist, that I through mine engine
Had in mine nece yput this fantasie
To doen thy lust, and hooly to be thine:
Why all the world would upon it crie,
And say, that I the worste trecherie
Did in this case, that ever was begon,
And she fordone, and thou right nought ywon.

"Wherefore ere I woll further gone or paas,
Yet eft I thee beseech, and fully say,
That privete go with us in this caas,
That is to saine, that thou us never wray,
And be not wroth, though I thee ofte pray,
To holden secree such an high mattere,
For skilfull is, thou wost well, my praiere.

"And thinke what wo there hath betid ere this
For making of avauntes, as men rede,
And what mischaunce in this world yet is
Fro day to day, right for that wicked dede,
For which these wise clerkes that ben dede
Have ever this proverbed to us young,
That the first vertue is to kepe the toung.

"And nere it that I wilne as now abredge
Diffusion of speech, I could almost
A thousand old stories thee alledge
Of women lost, through false and fooles bost,
Proverbes canst thy selfe enow, and wost
Ayenst that vice for to been a blabbe,
All saied men sooth, as often as they gabbe.

"O tongue alas, so often here beforne
Hast thou made many a lady bright of hew,
Saied "Welaway the day that I was borne,"
And many a maidens sorrow for to new,
And for the more part all is untrew
That men of yelpe, and it were brought to preve,
Of kind, none avauntour is to leve.

"Avauntour and a lier, all is one,
As thus: I pose a woman graunt me
Her love, and saieth that other woll she none,
And I am sworne to holden it secree,
And after I tell it two or three,
Ywis I am a vauntour at the lest,
And lie eke, for I breake my behest.

"Now looke than if they be not to blame,
Such maner folk, what shall I clepe hem, what,
That hem avaunt of women, and by name,
That yet behight hem never this ne that,
Ne know hem no more than mine old hat,
No wonder is, so God me sende hele,
Though women dreden with us men to dele.

"I say not this for no of mistrust of you,
Ne for no wise men, but for fooles nice,
And for the harme that in the world is now,
As well for follie oft, as for mallice,
For well wote I, in wise folke that vice
No woman dredeth, if she be well avised,
For wise been by fooles harme chastised.

"But now to purpose, leve brother dere,
Have all this thing that I have saied in mind,
And keep thee close, and be now of good chere
For all thy daies thou shalt me true find,
I shall thy processe set in such a kind,
And God toforne, that it shall thee suffise,
For it shall be right as thou wolt devise.

"For well I wote, thou meanest well parde,
Therefore I dare this fully undertake,
Thou wost eke what thy lady graunted thee,
And day is set the charters to make,
Have now good night, I may no lenger wake,
And bid for me, sith thou art now in blisse,
That God me sende death, or some lisse."

Who might tellen halfe the joy or feste
Which that the soule of Troilus tho felt,
Hearing theffect of Pandarus beheste:
His old wo, that made his herte to swelt,
Gan tho for joy wasten, and to melt,
And all the richesse of his sighes sore
At ones fled, he felt of hem no more.

But right so as these holtes and these hayis
That han in winter dead ben and dry,
Revesten him in grene, whan that May is,
Whan every lusty beste listeth to pley,
Right in that selfe wise, sooth for to sey,
Woxe suddainly his herte full of joy,
That gladder was there never man in Troy.

And gan his looke on Pandarus up cast
Full soberly, and friendly on to see,
And saied, "Friend, in Aprill the last,
As well thou wost, if it remember thee,
How nigh the death for wo thou founde me,
And how thou diddest all thy businesse
To know of me the cause of my distresse.

"Thou wost how long I it forbare to say
To thee, that art the man that I best trist,
And perill none was it to thee to bewray,
That wist I well: but tell me if thee list,
Sith I so loth was that thy selfe it wist,
How durst I mo tellen of this matere?
That quake now, and no wight may us here.

"But nathelesse, by that God I thee swere,
That as him list may all the world governe,
And if I lye, Achilles with his spere
Mine herte cleave, all were my life eterne,
As I am mortall, if I late or yerne
Would it bewray, or durst or should conne,
For all the good that God made under sonne.

"That rather die I would, and determine
As thinketh me now, stocked in prison,
In wretchednesse, in filth, and in vermine,
Captive to cruell king Agamemnon:
And this in all the temples of this toun,
Upon the Godes all, I woll thee swere
To morow day, if that thee liketh here.

"And that thou hast so much ydoen for me,
That I ne may it nevermore deserve,
This know I well, all might I now for thee
A thousand times on a morow sterve,
I can no more, but that I woll thee serve
Right as thy slave, whether so thou wend,
For evermore, unto my lives end.

"But here with all mine herte I thee beseech,
That never in me thou deme such folly
As I shall saine: me thought by thy speech,
That this which thou me dost for companie,
I should wenen it were a baudrie,
I am not wood, all if I leude be,
It is not so, that wote I well parde.

"But he that goeth for gold, or for richesse,
On such messages, call him what ye list,
And this that thou dost, call it gentlenesse,
Compassion, and fellowship, and trist,
Depart it so, for wide where is wist
How that there is diversitie required
Betwixen thinges like, as I have lered.

"And that thou know I thinke not ne wene,
That this service a shame be or jape,
I have my faire sister Polexene,
Cassandre, Helein, or any of the frape,
Be she never so faire, or well yshape,
Tell me whiche thou wilt of everychone
To have for thine, and let me than alone.

"But sith that thou hast done me this service,
My life to save, and for none hope of mede:
So for the love of God, this great emprise
Performe it out, now is the most nede
For high and low, withouten any drede,
I woll alway thine hestes all kepe,
Have now good night, and let us both slepe."

Thus held hem ech of other well apaied,
That all the world ne might it bet amend,
And on the morrow when they were araied,
Ech to his owne needs gan to entend:
But Troilus, though as the fire he brend,
For sharpe desire of hope, and of pleasaunce,
He not forgate his good governaunce.

But in himself, with manhood gan restrain
Ech rakell deed, and ech unbridled chere,
That all that liven soothe for to saine,
Ne should have wist by word or by manere
What that he ment, as touching this matere,
From every wight, as ferre as is the cloud,
He was so wise, and well dissimulen coud.

And all the while which that I now devise,
This was his life, with all his full might:
By day he was in Martes high servise,
That is to saine, in armes as a knight,
And for the more part all the long night,
He lay and thought how that he might serve
His lady best, her thanke for to deserve,

N'ill I not sweare, although he lay soft,
That in his thought n'as somwhat diseased,
Ne that he tourned on his pillowes oft,
And would of that him missed have ben eased,
But in such case men be nat alway pleased,
For naught I wote, no more than was he,
That can I deeme of possibilite.

But certaine is, to purpose for to go,
That in this while, as written is in geste,
He saw his lady sometime, and also
She with him spake, whan that she durst and leste,
And by hir both avise, as was the best,
Appointeden full warely in this need,
So as they durst, how they would proceed,

But it was spoken in so short a wise,
In such awaite alway, and in such feare,
Least any wight divinen or devise
Would of hem two, or to it lay an eare,
That all this world so lefe to hem ne were,
As that Cupide would hem his grace send,
To maken of her speech right an end.

But thilke little that they spake or wrought,
His wise ghost tooke aye of all such hede,
It seemed her he wiste what she thought,
Withouten word, so that it was no nede
To bid him aught to doen, or aught forbede,
For which she thought that love, all come it late,
Of all joy had opened her the yate.

And shortly of this processe for to pace,
So well his werke and wordes he beset,
That he so full stood in his ladies grace,
That twenty thousand times ere she let,
She thonked God she ever with him met,
So could he him governe in such servise,
That all the world ne might it bet devise.

For she found him so discreet in all,
So secret, and of such obeisaunce,
That well she felt he was to her a wall
Of steel, and shield of every displeasaunce,
That to been in his good governaunce,
So wise he was, she was no more afered,
I meane as ferre as aught ben requered.

And Pandarus to quicke alway the fire,
Was ever ylike prest and diligent,
To ease his friend was set all his desire,
He shone aye on, he to and fro was sent,
He letters bare, whan Troilus was absent,
That never man, as in his friendes nede,
Ne bare him bet than he, withouten drede.

But now peraventure some man waiten would
That every word, or sond, look, or chere
Of Troilus, that I rehearcen should,
In all this while, unto his lady dere,
I trow it were a long thing for to here,
Or of what wight that stant in such disjoint
His wordes all, or every looke to point.

Forsooth I have not herd it done ere this,
In story none, ne no man here I wene,
And though I would, I could not ywis,
For there was some epistle hem betwene,
That would (as saith mine autor) wel contene
Nie half this boke, of which him list not write,
How should I than a line of it endite?

But to the great effect, than say I thus,
That stonden in concord and in quiete
This ilke two, Creseide and Troilus,
As I have told, and in this time swete,
Save onely often might they not mete,
Ne leisure have, hir speeches to fulfell,
That it befell right as I shall you tell,

That Pandarus, that ever did his might,
Right for the fine that I shall speake of here,
As for to bringen to his house some night
His faire nece, and Troilus yfere,
Where as at leiser all this high matere
Touching hir love were at the full up bound,
Had out of doubt a time to it found.

For he with great deliberation
Had every thing that thereto might availe
Forne cast, and put in execution,
And nether left for cost ne for travaile,
Come if hem liste, hem should nothing faile,
And for to ben in aught aspied there,
That wist he well an impossible were.

Dredelesse it clere was in the wind
Of every pie, and every let game,
Now all is well, for all the world is blind
In this matter, both fremed and tame,
This timber is all ready up to frame,
Us lacketh naught, but that we weten would
A certaine houre, in which she comen should.

And Troilus, that all this purveyaunce
Knew at the full, and waited on it aye,
And hereupon eke made great ordinaunce,
And found his cause, and therwith his arraye,
If that he were missed night or day,
They thought there while he was about this servise,
That he was gone to done his sacrifice,

And must at such a temple alone wake,
Answered of Apollo for to be,
And first to sene the holy laurer quake,
Er that Apollo spake out of the tree,
To tellen him next whan Greeks should flie,
And forthy let him no man, God forbede,
But pray Apollo helpe in this nede.

Now is there litell more for to done,
But Pandare up, and shortly for to saine,
Right sone upon the chaunging of the Mone,
Whan lightlesse is the world a night or twaine,
And that the welkin shope him for to raine,
He streight a morrow unto his nece went,
Ye have well herde the fine of his entent.

Whan he was comen, he gan anon to play,
As he was wont, and of himselfe to jape,
And finally he swore, and gan her say,
By this and that, she should him not escape,
No lenger done him after her to gape:
But certainly, she must, by her leve,
Come soupen in his house with him at eve.

At which she lough, and gan her first excuse,
And said: "It raineth: lo, how should I gone,"
"Let be," (quod he) "ne stonde not thus to muse,
This mote be don, ye shal come there anone,"
So at the last, hereof they fell at one:
Or eles fast he swore her in her eere,
He nolde never comen there she were.

Sone after this, she to him gan rowne,
And asked him if Troilus were there,
He swore her nay, for he was out of towne:
And said, "Nece, I suppose that he were there,
You durst never thereof have the more fere?
For rather than men might him there aspie,
Me were lever a thousand folde to die."

Naught list mine auctour fully to declare,
What that she thought, whan as he said so,
That Troilus was out of towne yfare,
And if he said thereof soth or no,
But that withouten awaite with him to go,
She graunted him, sith he her that besought,
And as his nece obeyed as her ought.

But nathelesse, yet gan she him besech,
(Although with him to gone it was no fere)
For to beware of gofisshe peoples spech,
That dremen thinges, which that never were,
And wel avise him whom he brought there:
And said him, "Eme, sens I must on you trist,
Loke al be wel, and do now as you list."

He swore her this by stockes and by stones,
And by the Goddes that in Heven dwell,
Or eles were him lever soule and bones,
With Pluto king, as depe ben in Hell
As Tantalus: what should I more tell?
When al was well, he rose and toke his leve,
And she to souper came whan it was eve.

With a certaine number of her own men,
And with her faire nece Antigone,
And other of her women nine or ten,
But who was glad now, who, as trowe yee?
But Troilus, that stode and might it see
Throughout a litel window in a stewe,
Ther he beshet, sith midnight, was in mewe,

Unwist of every wight, but of Pandare.
But to the point, now whan that she was come,
With al joy, and al her frendes in fare,
Here eme anon in armes hath her nome,
And than to the souper al and some,
Whan as time was, full softe they hem set,
God wot there was no deinte ferre to fet.

And after souper gonnen they to rise,
At ease well, with herte full fresh and glade,
And wel was him that coude best devise
To liken her, or that her laughen made,
He songe, she plaide, he told a tale of Wade:
But at the last, as every thing hath end,
She toke her leave, and nedes would thence wend.

But O Fortune, executrice of wierdes,
O influences of these hevens hie,
Soth is, that under God ye ben our hierdes,
Though to us beestes ben the causes wrie:
This mene I now, for she gan homeward hie;
But execute was all beside hir leve,
At the goddes wil, for which she must bleve.

The bente Mone with her hornes all pale,
Saturnus and Jove, in Cancro joyned were,
That such a raine from Heven gan availe,
That every maner woman that was there,
Had of that smoky raine a very feere:
At which Pandare tho lough, and said thenne,
"Now were it time a lady to go henne.

"But good nece, if I might ever please
You any thing, than pray I you," (quod he)
"To don mine herte as now so great an ease,
As for to dwell here al this night with me,
For why? this is your owne house parde:
For by my trouth, I say it nat in game,
To wende as now, it were to me a shame."

Creseide, which that could as much good
As halfe a world, toke hede of his praire,
And sens it rained, and al was in a flode,
She thought, "As good chepe may I dwel here
And graunt it gladly with a frendes chere,
And have a thonk, as grutch and than abide,
For home to go it may nat well betide."

"I wol," (quod she) "mine uncle liefe and dere,
Sens that you list, it skill is to be so,
I am right glad with you to dwellen here,
I said but agame that I would go."
"Ywis graunt mercy nece," (quod he) "tho:
Were it agame or no, sothe to tell,
Now am I glad, sens that you list to dwel."

Thus al is wel, but tho began aright
The newe joy, and al the fest againe,
But Pandarus, if goodly had he might,
He would have hied her to bedde full faine,
And said, "O Lord, this is an huge raine,
This were a wether for to sleepen in,
And that I rede us soone to begin.

"And nece, wote ye where I woll you lay,
For that we shul not liggen ferre a sonder,
And for ye neither shullen, dare I say,
Here noise of raine, ne yet of thonder?
By God right in my closet yonder,
And I wol in that utter house alone,
Ben wardain of your women everichone.

"And in this middle chambre that ye se,
Shal your women slepen, wel and soft,
And there I said, shal your selven be:
And if ye liggen wel to night, come oft,
And careth not what wether is aloft.
The wine anone, and whan so you lest,
Go we to slepe, I trowe it be the best."

There n'is no more, but hereafter sone
They voide, dronke, and travers draw anone,
Gan every wight that hath nought to done
More in the place, out of the chambre gone,
And ever more so stereliche it rone,
And blewe therwith so wonderliche loude,
That wel nigh no man heren other coude.

Tho Pandarus her eme, right as him ought
With women, such as were her most about,
Ful glad unto her beddes side her brought,
And toke his leave, and gan ful lowe lout,
And said, "Here at this closet dore without,
Right overthwart, your women liggen all,
That whom ye list of hem, ye may sone call.

Lo, whan that she was in the closet laid,
And al her women forth by ordinaunce,
A bedde weren, there as I have said,
There n'as no more to skippen nor to praunce,
But boden go to bedde with mischaunce,
If any wight stering were any where,
And let hem slepen, that abedde were.

But Pandarus, that wel couth eche adele,
The old daunce, and every point therin,
Whan that he saw that all thing was wele,
He thought he wold upon his werke begin:
And gan the stewe dore al soft unpin,
As still as a stone, without lenger let,
By Troilus adoun right he him set.

And shortly to the point right for to gone,
Of al this werke he told him worde and end,
And said, "Make thee redy right anone,
For thou shalt into Heven blisse wend."
"Now blisfull Venus, thou me grace send,"
(Quod Troilus) "for never yet no dede,
Had I er now, ne halfendele the drede."

(Quod Pandarus) "Ne drede thee never a dele,
For it shal be right as thou wolt desire,
So thrive I, this night shall I make it wele,
Or casten all the gruel in the fire."
"Yet blisful Venus this night thou me enspire,"
(Quod Troilus) "as wis as I the serve,
And ever bet and bet shall till I sterve.

"And if I had, O Venus, ful of mirth,
Aspectes badde of Mars, or of Saturne,
Or thou combuste, or let were in my birth,
Thy father pray, al thilke harme disturne
Of grace, and that I glad ayen may turne:
For love of him thou lovedst in the shawe,
I mean Adon, that with the bore was slawe.

"Jove eke, for the love of faire Europe,
The which in forme of a bulle away thou fet:
Now help, O Mars, thou with thy blody cope
For love of Cipria, thou me naught ne let:
O Phebus, think when Daphne her selven shet
Under the barke, and laurer wore for drede,
Yet for her love, O help now at this nede.

"Mercurie, for the love of her eke,
For which Pallas was with Aglauros wroth,
Now helpe, and eke Diane I the beseke,
That this viage be nat to the loth:
O fatall sustren, which or any cloth
Me shapen was, my destine me sponne,
So helpeth to this werke that is begonne."

(Quod Pandarus) "Thou wretched mouses herte,
Art thou agast so that she will the bite?
Why do on this furred cloke on thy sherte,
And folow me, for I wol have the wite:
But bide, and let me gon before alite,"
And with that he gan undone a trappe,
And Troilus he brought in by the lappe.

The sterne winde so loude gan for to rout
That no wight other noise might here,
And they that laien at the dore without,
Ful sikerly they slepten al yfere:
And Pandarus, with ful sobre chere,
Goth to the dore anon withouten lette
There as they lay, and softly it shette.

And as he came ayen prively
His nece awoke, and asketh, "Who goeth there?"
"My owne dere nece," (quod he) "it am I,
Ne wondreth not, ne have of it no fere."
And nere he came, and said her in her eere:
"No worde for love of God I you besech,
Let no wight arise, and here of our spech."

"What, which way be ye comen? benedicite,"
(Quod she) "and how unwiste of hem all?"
"Here at this secrete trap dore," (quod he)
(Quod tho Creseide) "Let me some wight call:"
"Eigh, God forbid that it should so fall,"
(Quod Pandarus) "that ye such foly wrought,
"They might demen thing they never er thought.

"It is nat good a sleping hound to wake,
Ne yeve a wight a cause for to devine,
Your women slepen al, I undertake,
So that for hem the house men might mine,
And slepen wollen till the Sunne shine,
And whan my tale is brought to an end,
Unwist right as I came, so wol I wende.

"Now nece mine, ye shul well understonde,"
(Quod he) "so as ye women demen all,
That for to hold in love a man in honde,
And him her lefe and dere herte to call,
And maken him an howne above to call:
I mene, as love an other in this mene while,
She doth her selfe a shame, and him a gile.

"Now whereby that I tel you al this,
Ye wote your selfe, as wel as any wight,
How that your love al fully graunted is
To Troilus, the worthiest wight
One of the world, and therto trouth yplight,
That but it were on him alone, ye n'old
Him never falsen, while ye liven should.

"Now stonte it thus, that sith I fro you went,
This Troilus, right platly for to seine,
Is through a gutter by a privy went,
Into my chambre come in al this reine:
Unwist of every maner wight certaine,
Save of my selfe, as wisely have I joy,
And by the faith I owe to Priam of Troy.

"And he is come in such paine and distresse,
That but if he be al fully wood by this,
He sodainly mote fal into woodnesse,
But if God helpe: and cause why is this?
He saith him tolde is of a frende of his,
How that ye should loven one, that hight Horast,
For sorow of which this night shal be his last."

Creseide, which that al this wonder herde,
Gan sodainly about her herte cold,
And with a sighe she sorowfully answerd,
"Alas, I wende who so ever tales told,
My dere herte woulden me nat have hold
So lightly faulse: alas conceites wrong,
What harm they done, for now live I to long.

"Horaste alas, and falsen Troilus,
I know him not, God helpe me so," (quod she)
"Alas, what wicked spirite told him thus,
Now certes, eme, to morrow and I him se,
I shal therof as full excusen me,
As ever did woman, if him like,"
And with that word she gan ful sore sike.

"O God," (quod she) "so worldly selinesse
Which clerkes callen false felicite,
Ymedled is with many bitternesse,
Ful anguishous, than is, God wote," (quod she)
"Condicion of veine prosperite,
For either joyes comen nat yfere,
Or eles no wight hath hem alway here.

"O brotil wele of mannes joy unstable,
With what wight so thou be, or thou who play,
Either he wote, that thou joy art mutable,
Or wote it nat, it mote ben one of tway:
Now if he wot it nat, how may he say,
That he hath very joy and silinesse,
That is of ignorance aie in derkenesse?

"Now if he wote that joy is transitory,
As every joy of worldly thing mote flee,
Than every time he that hath in memory,
The drede of lesing, maketh him that he
May in no parfite sikernesse be:
And if to lese his joy, he set a mite,
Than semeth it, that joy is worth ful lite.

"Wherfore I wol define in this matere,
That truely for aught I can espie,
There is no very wele in this world here.
But O thou wicked serpent Jalousie,
Thou misbeleved, and envious folie,
Why hast thou Troilus made to me untrist,
That never yet agilte, that I wist?"

(Quod Pandarus) "Thus fallen is this caas.'
"Why uncle mine," (quod she) "who told him this,
And why doth my dere herte thus, alas?"
"Ye wote, ye nece mine," (quod he) "what it is,
I hope al shal we wel, that is amis,
For ye may quenche al this, if that you lest,
And doeth right so, I hold it for the best."

"So shal I do to morrow, ywis," (quod she)
"And God toforne, so that it shall suffice:"
"To morow alas, that were faire," (quod he)
"Nay, nay, it may nat stonden in this wise:
For nece mine, this writen clerkes wise,
That peril is with dretching in drawe,
Nay soche abodes ben nat worth an hawe.

"Nece, all thing hath time I dare avow,
For whan a chambre a fire is or an hall,
Well more nede is, it sodainly rescow,
Than to disputen and aske amonges all,
How the candle in the strawe is fall:
Ah benedicite, for al among that fare,
The harme is done, and farwel feldefare.

"And nece mine, ne take it nat a grefe,
If that ye suffre him al night in this wo,
God helpe me so, ye had him never lefe,
That dare I sain, now there is but we two,
But wel I wote that ye wol nat so do,
Ye ben to wise to done so great folie,
To put his life al night in jeopardie."

"Had I him never lefe! By God I wene,
Ye had never thing so lefe," (quod she.)
"Now by my thrifte," (quod he) "that shall be sene,
For sith ye make this ensample of me,
If iche al night would him in sorow se,
For al the treasour in the toune of Troie,
I bidde God, I never mote have joie,

"Now loke than, if ye that ben his love,
Should put his life al night in jeopardie,
For thing of nought: now by that God above
Nat onely this delay cometh of folie,
But of malice, if that I should nat lie:
What, platly and ye suffre him in distresse,
Ye neither bounte done ne gentilnesse."

(Quod tho Creseide) "Woll ye done o thing,
And ye therwith shal stinte al his disease,
Have here and here to him this blew ring,
For there is nothing might him better plese,
Save I my selfe, ne more his herte apese,
And say, my dere herte, that his sorow,
Is causelesse, that shal he sene to morow."

"A ring," (quod he) "ye hasel wodes shaken,
Ye nece mine, that ring must have a stone,
That might deed men alive all maken,
And such a ring trowe I that yee have none:
Discrecion out of your heed is gone,
That fele I now," (quod he) "and that is routh:
O time ylost, wel maiest thou cursen slouth.

"Wote ye not wel that noble and hie corage
Ne soroweth nat, ne stinteth eke for lite,
But if a foole were in a jelous rage,
I n'old setten at his sorow a mite,
But feste him with a fewe wordes all white,
Another day whan that I might him find;
But this thing stant al in another kind.

"This is so gentle and so tender of herte,
That with his death he wol his sorrows wreke,
For trust it well, how sore that him smart,
He woll to you no jealous wordes speke,
And forthy nece, er that his herte breke,
So speke your selfe to him of this matere,
For with a worde ye may his herte stere.

"Now have I told what peril he is in,
And is coming unwist is to every wight,
Ne parde harme may there be none, ne sin,
I wol my self be with you all this night,
Ye know eke how it is your owne knight,
And that by right, ye must upon him triste,
And I al prest to fetch him whan you liste."

This accident so pitous was to here,
And eke so like a sothe, at prime face,
And Troilus her knight, to her so dere,
His prive comming, and the siker place,
That though she did him as than a grace,
Considred all thinges as they now stood,
No wonder is, sens he did al for good.

Creseide answerde, "As wisely God at rest
My soule bring, as me is for him wo,
And, eme, ywis, faine would I don the best,
If that I grace had for to do so,
But whether that ye dwell, or for him go,
I am, till God me better minde send,
At dulcarnon, right at my wittes end."

(Quod Pandarus) "Ye, nece, wol ye here,
Dulcarnon is called fleming of wretches,
It semeth herd, for wretches wol nought lere,
For very slouth, or other wilfull tetches,
This is said by hem that be not worth two fetches,
But ye ben wise, and that ye han on hond,
N'is neither harde, ne skilfull to withstond."

"Than, eme," (quod she) "doeth here as you list,
But ere he come, I wol up first arise,
And for the love of God, sens all my trist
Is on you two, and ye beth bothe wise,
So werketh now, in so discrete a wise,
That I honour may have and he plesaunce,
For I am here, al in your governaunce."

"That is well said," (quod he) "my nece dere,
There good thrifte on that wise gentill herte,
But liggeth still, and taketh him right here,
It nedeth nat no ferther for him start,
And eche of you easeth other sorowes smart,
For love of God, and Venus I the hery,
For sone hope I, that we shall ben mery."

This Troilus full sone on knees him sette,
Full sobrely, right by her beddes heed,
And in his beste wise his lady grette:
But lord so she woxe sodainliche reed,
Ne though men should smiten of her heed,
She could not o word a right out bring,
So sodainly for his sodaine coming.

But Pandarus, that so wel coulde fele
In every thing, to play anon began,
And said, "Nece se how this lord gan knele:
How for your trouth, se this gentil man:"
And with that worde, he for a quishen ran,
And saied, "Kneleth now while that thou lest,
There God your hertes bring sone at rest."

Can I naught sain, for she bad him nat rise,
If sorow it put out of remembraunce,
Or eles that she toke it in the wise
Of duetie, as for his observaunce,
But well find I, she did him this pleasaunce,
That she him kist, although she siked sore,
And bad him sit adoun withouten more.

(Quod Pandarus) "Now woll ye well begin,
Now doth him sitte downe, good nece dere
Upon your beddes side, al there within,
That ech of you the bet may other here,"
And with that worde he drew him to the fiere,
And toke a light, and founde his countenaunce,
As for to loke upon an old romaunce.

Creseide that was Troilus lady right,
And clere stode in a ground of sikernesse,
All thought she her servant and her knight
Ne should none untrouth in her gesse:
That nathelesse, considered his distresse,
And that love is in cause of such folie,
Thus to him spake she of his jelousie.

" Lo, herte mine, as would the excellence
Of love, ayenst the which that no man may,
Ne ought eke goodly maken resistence,
And eke bicause I felte wel and say,
Your great trouth, and service every day:
And that your herte al mine was, soth to saine,
This drove me for to rewe upon your paine.

" And your goodnes have I founden alway yet,
Of which, my dere herte, and al my knight,
I thanke it you, as ferre as I have wit,
Al can I nat as much as it were right,
And I emforth my conning and my might
Have, and aie shal, how sore that ye smert,
Ben to you trew and hole with all mine herte.

" And dredelesse that shal be founden at preve,
But, herte mine, what al this is to sain
Shall well be told, so that ye nought you greve
Though I to you right on your self complain,
For there with meane I finally the pain,
That halte your herte and mine in heavinesse,
Fully to slaine, and every wrong redresse.

" My good mine, not I, for why ne how
That jelousie alas, that wicked wivere,
Thus causelesse is cropen into you,
The harme of which I would faine delivere:
Alas, that he all hole or of him some slivere
Should have his refute in so digne a place,
That Jove, him sone out of your herte race.

" But O thou, O auctour of nature,
Is this an honour to thy dignite,
That folke ungilty suffren here injure,
And who that gilty is, al quite goeth he?
O were it lefull for to plaine of the,
That undeserved sufferest jalousie,
O, that I would upon thee plaine and crie.

" Eke al my wo is this, that folke now usen
To saine right thus: ye jalousie is love,
And would a bushel of venim al excusen,
For that a grane of love is on it shove,
But that wote high Jove that sit above,
If it be liker love, hate, or grame,
And after that it ought beare his name.

" But certaine is, some maner jalousie
Is excusable, more than some ywis,
As whan cause is, and some such fantasie
With pite so well expressed is,
That it unneth doeth or saith amis,
But goodly drinketh up al his distresse,
And that excuse I for the gentilnesse.

" And some so full of fury is, and despite,
That it surmounteth his repression,
But, herte mine, ye be not in that plite,
That thonke I God, for which your passion,
I will nat call it but illusion
Of haboundance of love, and besie cure,
That doth your herte this disease endure.

" Of whiche I am sory, but not wrothe,
But for my devoir and your hertes rest,
Whan so you list, by ordal or by othe,
By sorte, or in what wise so you lest,
For love of God, let preve it for the best,
And if that I be gilty, do me die,
Alas, what might I more done or seie."

With that a few bright teeres new,
Out of her eyen fel, and thus she seid,
" Now God thou wost, in thought ne dede untrew
To Troilus was never yet Creseid,"
With that her heed doun in the bed she leid,
And with the shete it wrigh, and sighed sore,
And held her pece, nat a word spake she more.

But now help God, to quench al this sorow,
So hope I that he shall, for he best may,
For I have sene of a full misty morow,
Folowen ful oft a mery somers day,
And after winter foloweth grene May,
Men sene all day, and reden eke in stories,
That after sharpe shoures ben victories.

This Troilus, whan he her wordes herde,
Have ye no care, him list nat to slepe,
For it thought him no strokes of a yerde
To here or see Creseide his lady wepe,
But well he felt about his herte crepe,
For every teare which that Creseide astert,
The crampe of death, to straine him by the herte,

And in his minde he gan the time accurse
That he came there, and that he was borne,
For now is wicke tourned into worse,
And all that labour he hath doen beforne,
He wende it lost, he thought he nas but lorne,
" O Pandarus," thought he, " alas, thy wile,
Serveth of nought, so welaway the while."

And therwithall he hing adoun his hedde,
And fell on knees, and sorowfully he sight,
What might he sain? he felt he n'as but dedde,
For wroth was she that should his sorows light:
But nathelesse, whan that he speaken might,
Than said he thus, " God wote that of this game,
Whan all is wist, than am I not to blame."

Therwith the sorow of his herte shet,
That from his eyen fell there nat a tere,
And every spirite his vigour in knet,
So they astonied or oppressed were:
The feling of sorrow, or of his fere,
Or aught els, fledde were out of toune,
A doune he fell ail sodainly in swoune.

This was no little sorrow for to se,
But all was husht, and Pandare up as fast,
" O nece, peace, or we be lost" (quod he.)
Bethe nat agast, but certain at last,
For this or that, he into bedde him cast,
And saied, " O thefe, is this a mannes herte!"
And off he rent all to his bare sherte.

And saied " Nece, but an ye helpe us now,
Alas, your owne Troilus is forlorne."
" Ywis so would I, and I wist how,
Full fain" (quod she) " alas, that I was borne."
" Ye, nece, woll ye pullen out the thorne
That sticketh in his herte?" (quod Pandare)
" Say all foryeve, and stint is all this fare."

" Ye, that to me" (quod she) " full lever were
Than all the good the Sunne about goeth;"
And therwithall she swore him in his eare,
" Ywis my dere herte I am not wrothe,
Have here my trouth, and many other othe,
Now speake to me, for it am I Creseide:"
But all for naught, yet might he nat abreide.

Therwith his poulce, and paums of his hondes
They gan to frote, and wete his temples twain,
And to deliver him fro bitter bondes,
She oft him kist, and shortly for to sain,
Him to rewaken she did all her pain,
And at the last he gan his breath to drawe,
And of his swough sone after that adawe.

And gan bet minde, and reason to him take,
But wonder sore he was abashed ywis,
And with a sigh whan he gan bet awake
He saied, "O mercy God, what thing is this!"
"Why do ye with your selven thus amis!"
(Quod tho Creseide) "is this a mans game,
What Troilus, woll ye do thus for shame!"

And therwithal her arm over him she laied,
And all foryave, and oftime him kest.
He thonked her, and to her spake and saied
As fell to purpose, for his hertes rest,
And she to that answerde him as her lest,
And with her goodly wordes him disport
She gan and oft his sorowes to comfort.

(Quod Pandarus) "for ought I can aspien,
This light nor I ne serven here of naught,
Light is nat good for sike folkes eyen,
But for the love of God, sens ye been brought
In this good plite, let now none hevy thought
Been hanged in the hertes of you twey,
And bare the candle to the chimney."

Soone after this, though it no nede were,
Whan she soche othes as her list devise
Had of hem take, her thought tho no fere,
Ne cause eke none, to bid him thens rise:
Yet lesse thing than othes may suffice,
In many a case, for every wight I gesse,
That loveth well, meaneth but gentilnesse.

But in effect she would wete anon,
Of what man, and eke where, and also why
He jalous was, sens there was cause non:
And eke the signe that he toke it by,
She bade him that to tell her busily,
Or eles certain she bare him on honde,
That this was doen of malice her to fonde.

Withouten more, shortly for to sain
He must obey unto his ladies hest,
And for the lasse harme he must somwhat fain,
He saied her, whan she was at soche a fest,
She might on him have loked at the lest,
Not I nat what, all dere ynough a rishe,
As he that nedes must a cause out fish.

And she answerde, "Swete, all were it so
What harme was that, sens I non evill meane?
For by that God that bought us bothe two,
In all maner thing is mine entent cleane:
Soch arguments ne be nat worth a beane:
Woll ye the childist jalous counterfete,
Now were it worthy that ye were ybete."

Tho Troilus gan sorowfully to sike
Lest she be wroth, him thought his herte deide,
And saied, "Alas, upon my sorowes sike,
Have mercy, O swete herte mine Creseide:
And if that in tho wordes that I seide,
Be any wrong, I woll no more trespace,
Doeth what you list, I am all in your grace."

And she answerde, "Of gilt misericorde,
That is to saine, that I foryeve all this,
And evermore on this night you recorde,
And bethe well ware ye do no more amis:"
"Nay, dere herte mine, no more" (quod he) "ywis."
"And now" (quod she) "that I have you do smart,
Foryeve it to me, mine owne swete herte."

This Troilus with blisse of that surprised,
Put all in Goddes hand, as he that ment
Nothing but well, and sodainly avised
He her in his armes fast to him hent:
And Pandarus, with a full good entent,
Laied him to slepe, and saied, "If ye be wise,
Sweveneth not now, lest more folke arise."

What might or may the sely larke say,
Whan that the sparhauke hath him in his fote,
I can no more, but of these ilke tway,
(To whom this tale sugre be or sote)
Though I tary a yeere, sometime I mote,
After mine aucthour tellen hir gladnesse,
As well as I have told hir hevinesse.

Creseide, which that felt her thus ytake,
(As writen clerkes in hir bokes old)
Right as an aspen lefe she gan to quake,
Whan she him felt her in his armes fold:
But Troilus all hole of cares cold,
Gan thanken tho the blisfull goddes seven,
Through sondry pains to bring folk to Heven.

This Troilus in armes gan her straine,
And saied "Swete, as ever mote I gone,
Now be ye caught, here is but we twaine,
Now yeldeth you, for other boote is none:"
To that Creseide answerde thus anone,
"Ne had I er now, my swete herte dere,
Been yolde ywis, I were now not here."

O soth is saied, that healed for to be
As of a fever, or other great sicknesse,
Men must drinken, as we often se,
Full bitter drinke: and for to have gladnesse
Men drinken of pain, and great distresse:
I meane it here by, as for this aventure,
That through a pain hath founden al his cure.

And now swetnesse semeth far more swete,
That bitternesse assaied was biforne,
For out of wo in blisse now they flete,
Non soch they felten sens they were borne,
Now is this bet, than both two be lorne:
For love of God, take every woman hede,
To werken thus, if it come to the nede.

Creseide all quite from every drede and tene,
As she that just cause had him to trist,
Made him soche feast, it joy was to sene,
Whan she his trouth and clene entent wist:
And as about a tree with many a twist
Bitrent and writhe the swete wodbinde,
Can eche of hem in armes other winde.

And as the newe abashed nightingale,
That stinteth first, whan she beginneth sing,
Whan that she heareth any heerdes tale,
Or in the hedges any wight stearing.
And after siker doeth her voice outring:
Right so Creseide, whan that her drede stent,
Opened her herte, and told him her entent.

And right as he that seeth his death yshapen,
And dien mote, in aught that he may gesse,
And sodainly rescuous doeth hem escapen,
And from his death is brought in sikernesse:
For all this world, in soche present gladnesse,
Was Troilus, and hath his lady swete:
With worse hap God let us never mete.

Her armes smal, her streight backe and soft,
Her sides long, fleshy, smooth, and white,
He gan to stroke, and good thrift had full oft,
Her snowisse throte, her brestes round and lite:
Thus in this Heaven he gan him to delite,
And therwithall a thousand times her kist,
That what to doen for joy unneth he wist.

Than saied he thus, "O Love, O Charite,
Thy mother eke, Citheria the swete,
That after thy selfe, next heried be she
Venus I meane, the well willy planete:
And next that, Imeneus I thee grete,
For never man was to you goddes hold,
As I, which ye have brought fro cares cold.

"Benigne Love, thou holy bond of thingen,
Who so woll grace, and list thee not honouren,
Lo, his desire woll fly withouten wingen,
For n'oldest thou of bounte hem socouren
That serven best, and most alway labouren,
Yet were all lost, that dare I well sain certes,
But if thy grace passed our desertes.

"And for thou me, that lest thonke coud deserve
Of them that nombred been unto thy grace,
Hast holpen, there I likely was to sterve,
And me bestowed in so high a place,
That thilke boundes may no blisse surpace,
I can no more, but laude and reverence
Be to thy bounte and thine excellence."

And therwithall Creseide anon he kist,
Of whiche certain she felt no disease,
And thus saied he, "Now would God I wist,
Mine herte swete, how I you best might please:
What man" (quod he) "was ever thus at ease,
As I! On which the fairest, and the best
That ever I seie, deineth her to rest.

"Here may men seen that mercy passeth right,
The experience of that is felt in me,
That am unworthy to so swete a wight,
But herte mine, of your benignite
So thinke, that though I unworthy be,
Yet mote I nede amenden in some wise,
Right through the vertue of your hie service.

"And for the love of God, my lady dere,
Sith he hath wrought me for I shal you serve,
As thus I meane: woll ye be my fere,
To do me live, if that you list, or sterve:
So teacheth me, how that I may deserve,
Your thonk, so that I through mine ignorauncc,
Ne doe nothing that you be displeasaunce.

"For certes, freshe and womanliche wife,
This dare I say, that trouth and diligence,
That shall ye finden in me all my life,
Ne I woll not certain breaken your defence,
And if I doe, present or in absence,
For love of God, let slea me with the dede,
If that it like unto your womanhede."

"Ywis" (quod she) "mine owne hertes lust,
My ground of ease, and al mine herte dere,
Graunt mercy, for on that is all my trust:
But let us fall away fro this matere,
For it suffiseth, this that said is here,
And at o worde, without repentaunce,
Welcome my knight, my peace, my suffisaunce."

Of hir delite or joies, one of the least
Were impossible to my wit to say,
But judgeth ye that have been at the feast
Of soche gladnesse, if that him list play:
I can no more but thus, these ilke tway,
That night betwixen drede and sikernesse,
Felten in love the greate worthinesse.

O blisfull night, of hem so long isought,
How blithe unto hem bothe two thou were!
Why ne had I soch feast with my soule ybought!
Ye, or but the least joy that was there!
Away thou foule daunger and thou fere,
And let him in this Heaven blisse dwell,
That is so high, that all ne can I tell.

But soth is, though I cannot tellen all,
As can mine aucthour of his excellence,
Yet have I saied, and God toforne shall,
In every thing all hooly his sentence:
And if that I, at loves reverence,
Have any worde in eched for the best,
Doeth therwithall right as your selven lest.

For my wordes here, and every part,
I speake hem all under correction
Of you that feling have in loves art,
And put it ail in your discrecion,
To encrease or make diminicion
Of my language, and that I you beseech,
But now to purpose of my rather speech,

These ilke two that ben in armes laft,
So lothe to hem a sonder gon it were,
That eche from other wenden been biraft,
Or eles lo, this was her moste fere,
That all this thing but nice dreames were,
For which full oft eche of hem saied, "O swete,
Clepe I you thus, or els doe I it mete."

And lord so he gan goodly on her se,
That never his loke ne blent from her face,
And saied, "O my dere herte, may it be
That it be soth, that ye beene in this place?"
"Ye herte mine, God thanke I of his grace."
(Quod tho Creseide) and therwithall him kist,
That where her spirite was, for joy she n'ist.

This Troilus full often her eyen two
Gan for to kisse, and saied: "O eyen clere,
It weren ye that wrought me soche wo,
Ye humble nettes of my lady dere:
Tho there be mercy written in your chere,
God wote the text full harde is for to find,
How coud ye withouten bonde me bind?"

Therwith he gan her fast in armes take,
And well an hundred times gan he sike,
Not such sorrowfull sighes as men make
For wo, or eles whan that folke be sike:
But easie sighes, soche as been to like,
That shewed his affection within,
Of soche maner sighes could he not blin.

Sone after this, they spake of sondry things
As fell to purpose of this aventure,
And plaiyng enterchaungeden hir rings,
Of which I can not tellen no scripture,
But well I wot, a broche of gold and azure,
In which a rubbie set was like an herte,
Creseide him yave, and stacke it on his sherte.

Lord, trowe ye that a coveitous wretch,
That blameth love, and halte of it dispite,
That of tho pens that he can muckre and ketch
Ever yet yave to him soche delite,
As is in love, in o poinct in some plite:
Nay doubtelesse, for al so God me save
So parfite joie may no nigard have.

They woll say yes, but lord so they lie,
Tho busie wretches full of wo and drede,
That callen love a woodnesse of follie,
But it shall fall hem, as I shall you rede:
They shal forgon the white and eke the rede,
And live in wo, there God yeve hem mischaunce,
And every lover in his trouth avaunce.

As would God tho wretches that despise
Service of love had eares also long
As had Mida, full of covetise,
And thereto dronken had as hotte and strong
As Cresus did, for his affectes wronge
To teachen hem, that they been in the vice,
And lovers not, although they hold hem nice.

These ilke two, of whom that I you say,
Whan that hir hertes well assured were,
Tho gonnen they to speake and to play,
And eke rehearcen how, whan, and where
They knewe first, and every wo or fere
That passed was, but all such heavinesse,
I thonke it God, was tourned to gladnesse.

And evermore, whan that hem fell to speake
Of any thing of soche a time agone,
With kissing all that tale should breake,
And fallen into a new joy anone,
And didden all hir might, sens they were one
For to recoveren blisse, and been at ease,
And praised wo with joyes counterpaise.

Reason woll not that I speake of slepe,
For it accordeth not to my mattere,
God wote they toke of it full little kepe,
But lest this night that was to hem so dere
Ne should in vaine escape in no manere,
It was biset in joy and businesse,
Of all that souneth unto gentilnesse.

But whan the cock, commune astrologer,
Gan on his brest to beate, and after crowe,
And Lucifer, the daies messanger,
Gan to rise, and out his beames throwe,
And estward rose, to him that could it know,
Fortuna maior, than anone Creseide
With herte sore, to Troilus thus seide:

"Mine hertes life, my trust, all my pleasaunce,
That I was borne alas, that me is wo,
That day of us mote make disceveraunce,
For time it is to rise, and hence go,
Or eles I am lost for ever mo:
O night alas, why n'ilt thou over us hove,
As long as whan Alcmena lay by Jove.

"O blacke night, as folke in boke rede,
That shapen art by God, this world to hide
At certain times, with thy derke wede,
That under that men might in rest abide,
Wel oughten beasts to plain, and folke to chide
That there as day with labor would us brest
That thou thus flieth, and deinest us not rest.

"Thou doest alas, to shortly thine office,
Thou rakle night, there God maker of kinde,
Thee for thine hast, and thine unkind vice,
So fast aie to our hemisperie binde,
That nevermore under the ground thou wind,
For now for thou so highest out of Troie,
Have I forgone thus hastely my joie."

This Troilus, that with tho wordes felt,
As thought him tho, for pitous distresse
The bloodie teares from his herte melt,
As he that yet never soche hevinesse,
Assaied had, out of so great gladnesse,
Gan therewithall Creseide his lady dere
In armes strain, and hold in lovely manere.

"O cruell day, accuser of the joy
That night and love have stole, and fast ywrien,
Accursed be thy coming into Troie,
For every bowre hath one of thy bright eyen:
Envious day, what list thee so to spien,
What hast thou lost, why seekest thou this place?
There God thy light so quench for his grace.

"Alas, what have these lovers thee agilt?
Dispitous day, thine be the paine of Hell,
For many a lover hast thou slain, and wilt,
Thy poring in woll no where let hem dwell:
What profrest thou thy light here for to sell?
Go sell it hem that smale seales grave,
We woll thee not, us nedeth no day have."

And eke the sonne Titan gan he chide,
And said, "O foole, well may men thee dispise,
That hast all night the dawning by thy side,
And sufferest her so sone up fro thee rise,
For to disease us lovers in this wise:
What hold your bed there, thou and thy morow,
I bid God so yeve you bothe sorow."

Therwith ful sore he sighed, and thus he seide
"My lady right, and of my weale or wo
The well and roote, O goodly mine Creseide,
And shall I rise alas, and shall I so?
Now fele I that mine herte mote a two;
And how should I my life an houre save,
Sens that with you is all the life I have?

"What shall I doen? For certes I n'ot how
Ne whan alas, I shall the time see
That in this plite I may been eft with you,
And of my life God wote how shall that be,
Sens that desire right now so biteth me,
That I am dedde anon, but I retourne,
How should I long alas, fro you sojourne?

"But nathelesse, mine owne lady bright,
Were it so that I wist utterly,
That your humble servaunt and your knight
Were in your herte yset so fermely,
As ye in mine: the which truely
Me leaver were than these worlds twaine,
Yet should I bet enduren all my paine."

To that Creseide answerde right anon,
And with a sigh she saied, " O herte dere,
The game ywis so ferforth now is gon,
The first shal Phebus fallen from the sphere,
And everiche egle been the dovves fere,
And every rocke out of his place sterte,
Er Troilus go out of Creseides herte.

" Ye been so depe within mine herte grave,
That tho I would it turn out of my thought,
As wisely veray God my soule save,
To dien in the pain, I could nought:
And for the love of God, that us hath wrought,
Let in your brain none other fantasie
So crepen, that it cause me to die.

" And that ye me would have as fast in mind,
As I have you, that would I you beseche :
And if I wist sothly that to find
God might not apoint my joies to ech.
But herte mine, withouten more spech,
Bethe to me true, or else were it routh,
For I am thine, by God and by my trouth.

" Bethe glad forthy, and live in sikernesse,
Thus saied I never er this, ne shall to mo,
And if to you it were a great gladnesse,
To tourne ayen sone after that ye go,
As faine would I as ye, it were so,
As wisely God mine herte bring to reste :"
And him in armes toke, and ofte keste.

Ayenst his will, sithe it mote nedes bee,
This Troilus up rose and fast him cled,
And in his armes toke his ladie free,
An hundred times, and on his way him sped,
And with soche wordes, as his herte bled,
He saied : " Fare well my dere herte swete,
That God us graunt sound and sone to mete."

To which no word for sorow she answerd,
So sore gan his parting her distrain,
And Troilus unto his paleis ferd,
As wo begon as she was soth to sain,
So hard him wrong of sharp desire the pain,
For to been efte there he was in pleasaunce,
That it may never out of his remembraunce,

Retourned to his roiall paleis sone,
He soft unto his bedde gan for to sinke
To slepe long, as he was wont to doen,
But all for naught, he may well ligge and winke,
But slepe may there none in his herte sinke,
Thinking how she, for whom desire him brend,
A thousand folde was worth more than he wend.

And in his thought, gan up and doun to wind
Her wordes all, and every countenaunce,
And fermely impressen in his mind
The lest pointe that to him was pleasaunce,
And verely of thilke remembraunce,
Desire al newe him brende, and lust to brede,
Gan more than erst, and yet toke he none hede.

Creseide also, right in the same wise,
Of Troilus gan in her herte shet
His worthinesse, his lust, his dedes wise,
His gentilnesse, and how she with him met ;
Thonking love, he so well her beset,
Desiring oft to have her herte dere,
In soche a place as she durst make him chere.

Pandare a morow, which that commen was
Unto his nece, gan her faire to grete,
And saied, " All this night so rained it alas,
That all my drede is, that ye, nece swete,
Have little leiser had to slepe and mete :
Al this night" (quod he) " hath rain so do me wake,
That some of us I trowe hir heddes ake,"

And nere he came and said, " How stant it now
This merie morow, nece, how can ye fare ?"
Creseide answerde, " Never the bet for you,
Foxe that ye been, God yeve your herte care,
God helpe me so, ye caused all this fare,
Trowe I," (quod she) " for all your wordes white,
O who so seeth you, knoweth you full lite."

With that she gan her face for to wrie,
With the shete, and woxe for shame all redde,
And Pandarus gan under for to prie,
And saied " Nece, if that I shall been dedde,
Have here a sword, and smiteth of my hedde :"
With that his arme all sodainly he thrist
Under her necke, and at the last her kist.

I passe all that, which chargeth naught to say,
What, God foryave his death, and she also
Foryave : and with her uncle gan to play,
For other cause was there none than so :
But of this thing right to the effect to go,
Whan time was, home to her house she went,
And Pandarus hath fully his entent.

Now tourne we ayen to Troilus,
That restelesse full long a bedde lay,
And prively sent after Pandarus,
To him to come in all the hast he may,
He come anon, not ones saied he nay,
And Troilus full soberly he grete,
And doune upon the beddes side him sete.

This Troilus with all thaffectioun
Of friendly love, that herte may devise,
To Pandarus on his knees fill adoun :
And er that he would of the place arise,
He gan him thanken on his beste wise,
An hundred time he gan the time blesse,
That he was born, to bring him fro distresse.

He said, " O frend of friends, the alderbest
That ever was, the sothe for to tell,
Thou hast in Heaven ybrought my soul at rest,
Fro Phlegeton the firie flood of Hell,
That though I might a thousand times sell
Upon a day my life in thy service,
It might not a mote in that suffice.

" The Sonne, which that all the world may se,
Sawe never yet, my life that dare I leie,
So joly, faire, and goodly, as is she
Whose I am all, and shall till that I deie,
And that I thus am hers, dare I seie,
That thanked be the high worthinesse
Of love, and eke thy kinde businesse.

" Thus hast thou me no little thing iyeve,
For why to thee obliged be for aie,
My life, and why ? for through thine helpe I live,
Or els dedde had I been ago many a day :"
And with that worde doun in his bed he lay,
And Pandarus full soberly him herde,
Till all was said, and than he him answerde.

dere frende, if I have doen for thee,
y case, God wote it is me lefe,
m as glad as man may of it be,
elpe me so, but take now not agrife,
[shall saine, beware of this mischiefe,
her as now thou broght art to thy blis,
hou thy selfe ne cause it not to mis.

of fortunes sharpe adversite,
orst kind of infortune is this,
ı that hath been in prosperite,
; remember, whan it passed is.
art wise inough, forthy, doe not amis,
t to rakell, though thou sit warme,
thou be, certain it woll thee harme.

ı art at ease, and hold thee well therin,
so sure as redde is every fire,
at a crafte is to kepe well as win,
alway well thy speach and thy desire,
orldly joy holdeth not by a wire,
reveth well, it brest alday so ofte,
y neede is to werken with it softe."

Troilus) " I hope, and God to forne,
re frende, that I shall so me bere,
n my gift there shall nothing been lorne,
ill not rakle, as for to greven here ;
deth not this matter often tere,
istest thou mine herte wel Pandare,
ote of this thou wouldest lite care."

an he tell him of his glad night,
hereof first his herte dradde, and how,
aied " Frende, as I am true knight,
y that faith I owe to God and you,
it never halfe so hote as now,
ie the more that desire me biteth
e her best, the more it me deliteth.

t my selfe not wisely, what it is,
owe I feele a new qualite,
another than I did er this :"
re answerd and saied thus, " that he
nes may in Heaven blisse be,
leth other waies dare I lay,
thilke time he first heard of it say."

s a worde for all, that Troilus
ever ful to speke of this matere,
r to praisen unto Pandarus
ounte of his right lady dere,
'andarus to thanke, and maken chere,
ale was aie span newe to begin,
at the tale departed hem a twinne.

after this, for that fortune it would,
en was the blisfull time swete,
Troilus was warned, that he should,
he was erst, Creseide his lady mete :
hich he felt his herte in joy flete,
aithfully gan all the goodes hery,
et see now, if that he can be mery,

olden was the forme, and al the gise
: comming, and of his also,
was erst, which nedeth nought devise,
lainly to theffect right for to go :
and surete Pandarus hem two
le brought, whan hem both lest,
hus they ben in quiet and in rest.

Naught nedeth it to you sith they ben met
To aske at me, if that they blithe were,
For if it erst was well, tho was it bet
A thousand folde, this nedeth not enquere :
A go was every sorow and every fere,
And both ywis they had, and so they wend,
As much joy as herte may comprehend.

This n'is na litel thing of for to sey,
This passeth every wit for to devise,
For eche of hem gan others lust obey,
Felicite, which that these clerkes wise
Commenden so, ne may no here suffise,
This joy ne may not ywritten be with inke,
This passeth al that herte may bethinke.

But cruel day, so welaway the stound,
Gan for to aproche, as they by signes knew,
For which hem thought felen dethes wound,
So wo was hem, that chaungen gan hir hew
And day they gonnen to dispise al new,
Calling it traitour, envious and worse,
And bitterly the daies light they corse.

(Quod Troilus) " Alas, now am I ware
That Pirous, and tho swifte stedes thre,
Which that drawen forth the Sunnes chare,
Han gon some by pathe in dispite of me,
And maketh it so sone day to be,
And for the Sunne him hasten thus to rise,
Ne shall I never don him sacrifice."

But nedes day departe hem must sone,
And whan hir speech done was, and hir chere,
They twin anon, as they were wont to done,
And setten time of meting eft yfere :
And many a night they wrought in this manere :
And thus fortune a time ladde in joie
Creseide, and eke this kinges son of Troie.

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singings,
This Troilus gan all his life to lede,
He spendeth, justeth, and maketh feestings,
He geveth freely oft, and chaungeth wede,
He helde about him alway out of drede
A world of folke, as come him well of kind,
The freshest and the best he coulde find.

That such a voice was of him, and a steven,
Throughout the world, of honour and largesse,
That it up ronge unto the yate of Heven,
And as in love he was in such gladnesse,
That in his herte he demed, as I gesse,
That there n'is lover in this world at ease,
So wel as he, and thus gan love him please.

The goodlihede or beaute, which the kind,
In any other lady had ysette,
Can not the mountenaunce of a gnat unbind,
About his herte, of al Creseides nette :
He was so narow ymasked, and yknette,
That is undon in any maner side,
That n'il nat ben, for ought that may betide.

And by the hond full ofte he would take
This Pandarus, and into gardin lede,
And such a feest, and such a processe make
Him of Creseide, and of her womanhede,
And of her beaute, that withouten drede,
It was an Heven his wordes for to here,
And than he woulde sing in this manere :

"Love, that of erth and sea hath governaunce,
Love, that his heestes hath in Heven hie,
Love, that with an holsome aliaunce,
Halte people joyned, as him list hem gie,
Love, that knitteth law and companie,
And couples doth in vertue for to dwell,
Binde this accord, that I have told and tell.

"That, that the world with faith, which that is stable,
Diverseth so his staundes according,
That elements that bethe discordable,
Holden a bonde, perpetually during,
That Phebus mote his rosy day forth bring,
And that the Mone hath lordship over the nights,
Al this doeth Love, aie heried be his mights.

"That, that the sea, that greedy is to flowen,
Constraineth to a certaine ende so
His floodes, that so fiercely they ne growen
To drenchen earth and all for evermo,
And if that Love aught let his bridle go,
All that now loveth asunder should lepe,
And lost were all, that Love halt now to hepe.

"So would to God, that authour is of kind,
That with his bond, Love of his vertue list
To searchen hertes all, and fast bind,
That from his bond no wight the wey out wist,
And hertes cold, hem would I that hem twist,
To maken hem love, and that list hem aie rew
On hertes sore, and keep hem that ben trew."

In all needes for the townes werre
He was, and aye the first in armes dight,
And certainely, but if that bookes erre,
Save Hector, most ydradde of any wight,
And this encrease of hardinesse and might
Come him of love, his ladies thanke to win,
That altered his spirit so within.

In time of truce on hauking would he ride,
Or els hunt bore, beare, or lioun,
The small beastes let he gon beside,
And whan that he come riding into the toun,
Full oft his lady from her window doun,
As fresh as faucon, comen out of mue,
Full redely was him goodly to salue.

And most of love and vertue was his speech,
And in dispite had all wretchednesse,
And doubtlesse no need was him beseech
To honouren hem that had worthinesse,
And easen hem that weren in distresse,
And glad was he, if any wight well ferde
That lover was, whan he it wist or herde.

For sooth to saine, he lost held every wight,
But if he were in Loves high servise,
I meane folke that aught it ben of right,
And over all this, so well could he devise
Of sentement, and in so uncouth wise
All his array, that every lover thought,
That al was wel, what so he said or wrought.

And though that he be come of blood roiall,
Him list of pride at no wight for to chace,
Benigne he was to ech in generall,
For which he gate him thank in every place:
Thus wolde Love, yheried by his grace,
That pride, and ire, envie, and avarice,
He gan to flie, and every other vice.

Thou lady bright, the doughter of Diane,
Thy blind and winged son eke dan Cupide,
Ye sustren nine eke, that by Helicone
In hill Pernaso, listen for to abide,
That ye thus ferre han deined me to gide,
I can no more, but sens that ye woll wend,
Ye heried ben for aye withouten end.

Through you have I said fully in my song
Theffect and joy of Troilus servise,
All be that there was some disease among,
As mine authour listeth to devise,
My thirde booke now end I in this wise,
And Troilus in lust and in quiete,
Is with Creseide his owne herte swete.

EXPLICIT LIBER TERTIUS.

PROEME.

B. IV. V. 1—39

But all too little, welaway the while
Lasteth such joy, ythonked bee Fortune,
That seemeth truest, whan she woll begile,
And can to fooles her songe entune,
That she hem hent, that blent, traitor commune:
And whan a wight is from her whele ythrow,
Than laugheth she, and maketh him the mowe.

From Troilus she gan her bright face
Away to writhe, and tooke of him none hede,
And cast him clene out of his ladies grace,
And on her whele she set up Diomede,
For which mine herte right now ginneth blede,
And now my pen alas, with which I write,
Quaketh for drede of that I must endite.

For how Creseide Troilus forsooke,
Or at the least, how that she was unkind,
Mote henceforth ben matter of my booke,
As writen folk through which it is in mind,
Alas, that they should ever cause find
To speake her harme, and if they on her lie,
Ywis hemselfe should have the villanie.

O ye Herines, nightes doughters three,
That endelesse complaine ever in paine,
Megera, Alecto, and eke Tesiphonee,
Thou cruell Mars eke, father of Quirine,
This ilke fourth booke helpe me to fine,
So that the loos, and love, and life yfere
Of Troilus be fully shewed here.

INCIPIT LIBER QUARTUS.

Ligging in host, as I have said ere this,
The Greekes strong, about Troy toun,
Befell, that whan that Phebus shining is
Upon the breast of Hercules Lion,
That Hector, with many a bold baron,
Cast on a day with Greekes for to fight,
As he was wont, to greve hem what he might.

Not I how long or short it was bitwene
This purpose, and that day they fighten ment,
But on a day well armed bright and shene,
Hector and many a worship knight out went

With speare in honde, and big bowes bent,
And in the berde withouten lenger lette,
Hir fomen in the field anone hem mette.

The lorge day with speares sharpe yground,
With arrows, dartes, swerds, and maces fell,
They fight, and bringen horse and man to ground
And with hir axes out the braines quell,
But in the last shoure, sooth to tell,
The folke of Troy hem selven so misleden,
That with the worse at night home they fleden.

At whiche day was taken Anthenor,
Maugre Polimidas, or Monesteo,
Xantippe, Sarpedon, and Palestinor,
Polite, or eke the Troyan dan Rupheo,
And other lasse folke, as Phebuseo,
So that for harm that day the folk of Troy
Dreden to lese a great part of hir joy.

Of Priamus was yeve at Grekes request
A time of truce, and tho they gonnen trete
Hir prisoners to chaungen most and lest,
And for the surplus yeven sommes grete,
This thing anon was couth in every strete,
Both in th'assiege, in toune, and every where,
And with the first it came to Calcas ere.

Whan Calcas knew this tretise should hold
In consistorie among the Greekes soone
He gan in thringe, forth with lordes old,
And set him there as he was wont to done,
And with a chaunged face hem bade a boone
For love of God, to done that reverence,
To stinten noise, and yeve him audience.

Than said he thus, " Lo, lordes mine I was
Troyan, as it is knowen out of drede,
And if that you remember, I am Calcas,
That alderfirst yave comfort to your nede,
And tolde well howe that you should spede,
For dredelesse through you shall in a stound
Ben Troy ybrent, and beaten doun to ground.

" And in what forme, or in what manner wise
This toun to shend, and all your lust atcheve,
Ye have ere this well herde me devise:
This know ye my lordes, as I leve,
And for the Greekes weren me so leve,
I came my selfe in my proper persone
To teach in this how you was best to done.

" Having unto my treasour, ne my rent,
Right no regard in respect of your ease,
Thus all my good I left, and to you went,
Wening in this you lordes for to please,
But all that losse ne doth me no disease,
I vouchsafe, as wisely have I joy,
For you to lese all that I have in Troy.

" Save of a doughter that I left, alas,
Sleeping at home, whan out of Troy I stert,
O sterne, O cruell father that I was,
How might I have in that so hard an herte?
Alas, that I ne had brought her in my shert,
For sorow of which I wol nat live to morow,
But if ye lordes rew upon my sorow.

" For because that I saw no time ere now
Her to deliver, iche holden have my pees,
But now or never, if that it like you,
I may her have right now doubtlees:
O helpe and grace, among all this prees,
Rew on this old caitife in distresse,
Sith I through you have all this hevinesse.

" Ye have now caught, and fettred in prison
Troyans enow, and if your willes be,
My child with one may have redemption,
Now for the love of God, and of bounte,
One of so fele alas, so yefe him me:
What need were it this praier for to werne,
Sith ye shult have both folk and toun as yerne.

" On perill of my life I shall nat lie,
Apollo hath me told full faithfully,
I have eke found by astronomie,
By sort, and by augurie truely,
And dare well say the time is fast by,
That fire and flambe on all the toun shall sprede,
And thus shall Troy turne to ashen dede.

" For certaine, Phebus and Neptunus both,
That makeden the walles of the toun,
Ben with the folke of Troy alway so wroth,
That they woll bring it to confusioun
Right in despite of king Laomedoun,
Because he nolde paien hem hir hire,
The toune of Troy shall ben set on fire."

Telling his tale alway this olde grey,
Humble in his speech and looking eke,
The salte teares from his eyen twey,
Full faste ronnen doune by either cheke,
So long he gan of succour hem beseke,
That for to heale him of his sorowes sore,
They gave him Antenor withouten more.

But who was glad enough, but Calcas tho,
And of this thing full soone his nedes leide
On hem that shoulden for the treatise go
And hem for Antenor full ofte preide,
To bringen home king Thoas and Creseide,
And whan Priam his safegarde sent,
Th'embassadours to Troy streight they went.

The cause I told of hir comming, the old
Priam the king, full soone in generall,
Let here upon his parliment hold,
Of which th'effect rehearsen you I shall:
Th'embassadours ben answerde for finall,
The eschaunge of prisoners, and all this nede
Hem liketh well, and forth in they procede.

This Troilus was present in the place,
When asked was for Antenor Creseide,
For which full sone chaungen gan his face,
As he that with tho wordes well nigh deide,
But nathelesse he no word to it seide,
Lest men should his affection espie,
With mannes herte he gan his sorowes drie.

And full of anguish and of gresly drede,
Abode what other lords would to it sey,
And if they would graunt, as God forbede,
Th'eschange of her, than thought he thinges twey:
First, how to save her honour, and what wey
He might best th'eschaunge of her withstond,
Full fast he cast how all this might stond.

Love him made all prest to done her bide,
And rather dien than she should go,
But Reason said him on that other side,
" Withouten assent of her do nat so,

Lest for thy werke she would be thy fo,
And saine, that through thy medling is yblow
Your brother love, there it was not erst know."

For which he gan deliberen for the best,
And though the lordes would that she went,
He would let hem graunt what hem lest,
And tell his lady first what that they ment,
And whan that she had said him her entent,
Thereafter would he worken also blive,
Tho all the world ayen it wolde strive.

Hector, which that well the Greekes herd,
For Antenor how they would have Creseide,
Gan it withstond, and soberly answerd :
"Sirs, she n'is no prisoner," (he seide)
"I n'ot on you who that this charge leide,
But on my part, ye may eftsoones hem tell,
We usen here no women for to sell."

The noise of people up stert than atones,
As brimme as blase of straw yset on fire,
For infortune it would for the nones,
They shoulden hir confusion desire : [enspire
"Hector," (quod they) "what ghost may you
This woman thus to shild, and done us lese
Dan Antenore, a wrong way now ye chese.

"That is so wise, and eke so bold baroun,
And we have need of folke, as men may see,
He is one of the greatest of this toun :
O Hector, lette, thy fantasies bee,
O king Priam," (quod they) "thus segge wee,
That all our voice is to forgone Creseide,"
And to deliver Antenor they preide.

O Juvenall lord, true is thy sentence,
That little wenen folke what is to yerne,
That they ne finden in hir desire offence,
For cloud of errour ne lette hem discerne
What best is, and lo, here ensample as yerne.
These folke desiren now deliverance
Of Antenor, that brought hem to mischaunce.

For he was after traitour to the toun
Of Troy alas, they quitte him out to rathe,
O nice world, so thy discretioun,
Creseide, which that never did hem scathe,
Shall now no lenger in her blisse bathe,
But Antenor, he shall come home to toun,
And she shall out, thus said heere and houn.

For which delibered was by parliment,
For Antenor to yeelden out Creseide,
And it pronounced by the president,
Though that Hector nay full oft praid,
And finally, what wight that it withsaid,
It was for naught, it must ben, and should,
For substaunce of the parliment it would.

Departed out of the parliment echone,
This Troilus, without wordes mo,
Unto his chamber spedde him fast alone,
But if it were a man of his or two,
The which he bad out faste for to go,
Because he would slepen, as he said,
And hastely upon his bedde him laid.

And as in winter, leaves ben biraft
Ech after other, till trees be bare,
So that there n'is but barke and branch ylaft,
Lithe Troilus, biraft of ech welfare,
Ybounden in the blacke barke of care,
Disposed wode out of his witte to breide,
So sore him sate the chaunging of Creseide.

He rist him up, and every dore he shette,
And window eke, and tho this sorrowfull man
Upon his beddes side doune him sette,
Full like a dead image, pale and wan,
And in his breast the heaped wo began
Out brust, and he to worken in this wise
In his woodnesse, as I shall you devise.

Right as the wilde bull beginneth spring
Now here, now there, idarted to the herte,
And of his death roreth, in complaining,
Right so gan he about the chamber stert,
Smiting his breast aye with his fistes smert,
His head to the wall, his body to the ground,
Full oft he swapt, himselven to confound.

His eyen two for pity of his herte
Out stremeden as swift as welles twey,
The highe sobbes of his sorrowes smert
His speech him reft, unnethes might he sey,
"O death alas, why n'ilt thou do me dey?
Accursed be that day which that nature
Shope me to ben a lives creature."

But after whan the fury and all the rage
Which that his heart twist, and fast threst,
By length of time somewhat gan assuage,
Upon his bed he laid him doun to rest,
But tho begon his teares more out to brest,
That wonder is the body may suffise
To halfe this wo, which that I you devise.

Than said he thus : "Fortune alas, the while
What have I done? what have I thee agilt?
How mightest thou for routhe me begile?
Is there no grace? and shall I thus be spilt?
Shall thus Creseide away for that thou wilt?
Alas, how mightest thou in thine herte find
To ben to me thus cruell and unkind?

"Have I thee nat honoured all my live,
As thou well wotest, above the Gods all?
Why wilt thou me fro joy thus deprive?
O Troilus, what may men now thee call,
But wretch of wretches, out of honour fall
Into misery, in which I woll bewaile
Creseide alas, till that the breath me faile.

"Alas, Fortune, if that my life injoy
Displeased had unto thy foule envie,
Why ne haddest thou my father king of Troy
Biraft the life, or done my brethren die,
Or slaine my selfe, that thus complaine and crie?
I combre world, that may of nothing serve,
But ever dye, and never fully sterve.

"If that Creseide alone were me laft,
Naught raught I whider thou woldest me stere,
And her alas, than hast thou me byraft :
But evermore, lo, this is thy manere,
To reve a wight that most is to him dere,
To preve in that thy gierfull violence :
Thus am I lost, there helpeth no defence.

"O very Lord, O Love, O God alas,
That knowest best mine herte and al my thought,
What shal my sorowfull life done in this caas,
If I forgo that I so dere have bought,

Sens ye Creseide and me have fully brought
Into your grace, and both our hertes sealed,
How may ye suffer alas, it be repealed?

"What I may done, I shal while I may dure
On live, in turment and in cruell paine,
This infortune, or this disaventure,
Alone as I was borne I woll complaine,
Ne never woll I seene it shine or raine,
But end I woll as Edippe in derkenesse
My sorrowfull life, and dien in distresse.

"O wery ghost, that errest to and fro,
Why nilt thou flien out of the wofullest
Body, that ever might on grounde go?
O soule, lurking in this wofull neste,
Fly forthout mine herte, and let it breste,
And follow alway Creseide thy lady dere,
Thy right place is now no lenger here.

"O wofull eien two, sens your disport
Was all to seene Creseides eyen bright,
What shall ye done, but for my discomfort
Stoden for naught, and wepen out your sight,
Sens she is queint, that wont was you to light,
In veine from this forth have I eyen twey
Yformed, sens your vertue is awey.

"O my Creseide, O lady soveraine
Of this wofull soule that thus crieth,
Who shall now yeven comfort to thy paine?
Alas, no wight, but whan mine herte dieth,
My spirit, which that so unto you hieth,
Receive in gree, for that shall aye you serve,
Forthy no force is, though the body serve.

"O ye lovers, that high upon the whele
Ben sette of Fortune in good aventure,
God lene that ye finded aye love of stele,
And long mote your life in joy endure,
But whan ye comen by my sepulture,
Remembreth that your fellow resteth there,
For I loved eke, though I unworthy were.

"O old unholsome and mislived man,
Calcas I meane, alas, what eiled thee
To ben a Greek, sens thou art borne Trojan?
O Calcas, which that wolt my bane be,
In cursed time was thou borne for me,
As would blissfull Jove for his joy,
That I thee had where I would in Troy."

A thousand sighes hotter than the glede,
Out of his breast, each after other went,
Medled with plaint new, his wo to fede,
For which his wofull teares never stent,
And shortly so his sorowes him to rent,
And woxe so mate, that joy or pennaunce
He feeleth none, but lieth in a traunce.

Pandare, which that in the parliment
Had heard what every lord and burgess seid,
And how full graunted was by one assent,
For Antenor to yelden out Creseid:
Gan well nigh wood out of his wit to breid,
So that for wo he niste what he ment,
But in a rage to Troilus he went.

A certaine knight, that for the time kept
The chamber dore, undid it him anone,
And Pandare, that full tenderly wept,
Into the derke chamber as still as stone,
Toward the bedde gan softly to gone,
So confuse, that he n'ist what to say,
For very wo, his wit was nigh away.

And with chere and looking all to torne,
For sorow of this, and with his armes folden,
He stood this wofull Troilus beforne,
And on his pitous face he gan beholden,
But so oft gan his herte colden,
Seeing his friend in wo, whose heavinesse
His herte slough, as thought him for distresse.

This wofull wight, this Troilus that felt
His friend Pandare ycomen him to see,
Gan as the snow ayenst the Sunne melt,
For which this wofull Pandare of pite
Gan for to weepe as tenderly as he:
And speechlesse thus ben these ilke twey,
That neither might for sorow o word sey.

But at the last, this wofull Troilus,
Nigh dead for smert, gan bresten out to rore,
And with a sorrowfull noise he said thus
Among his sobbes and his sighes sore,
"Lo, Pandare I am dead withouten more,
Hast thou not heard at parliament," he seide,
"For Antenor how lost is my Creseide?"

This Pandare full dead and pale of hew,
Full pitously answerde, and said, "Yes,
As wisely were it false as it is trew,
That I have heard, and wote all how it is,
O mercy God, who would have trowed this,
Who would have wend, that in so little a throw
Fortune our joy would have overthrow.

"For in this world there is no creature,
As to my dome, that ever saw ruine
Straunger than this, through case or aventure,
But who may all eschue or all devine,
Such is this world, forthy I thus define:
Ne trust no wight to find in Fortune
Aye property, her yeftes ben commune.

"But tell me this, why thou art now so mad
To sorrowen thus, why list thou in this wise,
Sens thy desire all holy hast thou had,
So that by right it ought inough suffise,
But I that never felt in my servise
A friendly chere or looking of an eie,
Let me thus wepe and wailen till I die.

"And over al this, as thou wel wost thy selve,
This toune is full of ladies all about,
And to my dome, fairer than such twelve
As ever she was, shal I finden in some rout,
Ye one or twey, withouten any dout:
Forthy be glade mine owne dere brother,
If she be lost, we shall recover another.

"What God forbid alway that ech pleasaunce
In o thing were, and in none other wight,
If one can sing, another can well daunce,
If this be goodly, she is glad and light,
And this is faire, and that can good aright,
Ech for his vertue holden is for dere,
Both heroner and faucon for rivere.

"And eke as writ Zansis, that was full wise,
The new love out chaseth oft the old:
And upon new case lieth new avise,
Thinke eke thy selfe to saven art thou hold,

Lest for thy werke she would be thy fo,
And saine, that through thy medling is yblow
Your brother love, there it was not erst know."

For which he gan deliberen for the best,
And though the lordes would that she went,
He would let hem graunt what hem lest,
And tell his lady first what that they ment,
And whan that she had said him her entent,
Thereafter would he worken also blive,
Tho all the world ayen it wolde strive.

Hector, which that well the Greekes herd,
For Antenor how they would have Creseide,
Gan it withstond, and soberly answerd :
"Sirs, she n'is no prisoner," (he seide)
"I n'ot on you who that this charge leide,
But on my part, ye may eftsoones hem tell,
We usen here no women for to sell."

The noise of people up stert than atones,
As brimme as blase of straw yset on fire,
For infortune it would for the nones,
They shoulden hir confusion desire : [enspire
"Hector," (quod they) "what ghost may you
This woman thus to shild, and done us lese
Dan Antenore, a wrong way now ye chese.

"That is so wise, and eke so bold baroun,
And we have need of folke, as men may see,
He is one of the greatest of this toun :
O Hector, lette, thy fantasies bee,
O king Priam," (quod they) "thus segge wee,
That all our voice is to forgone Creseide,"
And to deliver Antenor they preide.

O Juvenall lord, true is thy sentence,
That little wenen folke what is to yerne,
That they ne finden in hir desire offence,
For cloud of errour ne lette hem discerne
What best is, and lo, here ensample as yerne .
These folke desiren now deliverance
Of Antenor, that brought hem to mischaunce.

For he was after traitour to the toun
Of Troy alas, they quitte him out to rathe,
O nice world, so thy discretioun,
Creseide, which that never did hem [illegible] so,
Shall now [illegible] fro,
Bettle in dock out, now this, now that, Pandare?
Now foule fall her for thy wo that care.

"Thou farest eke by me Pandarus,
As he, that whan a wight is wo bigon,
He commeth to him apace, and saith right thus,
'Thinke not on smart, and thou shalt feele none,'
Thou maiest me first transmewen in a stone,
And reve me my passions all,
Or thou so lightly doe my wo to fall.

"The death may well out of my brest depart
The life, so long may this sorow mine :
But fro my soule shall Creseides dart
Out nevermore, but doune with Proserpine
Whan I am dead, I woll won in pine,
And there I woll eternally complain
My wo, and how that twinned be we twain.

"Thou hast here made an argument full fine,
How that it should lasse paine be
Creseide to forgone, for she was mine,
And lived in ease and in felicite :

Ybounden in the blacke barke of care,
Disposed wode out of his witte to breide,
So sore him sate the chaunging of Creseide.

He rist him up, and every dore he shette,
And window eke, and tho this sorrowfull man
Upon his beddes side doune him sette,
Full like a dead image, pale and wan,
And in his breast the heaped wo began
Out brust, and he to worken in this wise
In his woodnesse, as I shall you devise.

Right as the wilde bull beginneth spring
Now here, now there, idarted to the herte,
And of his death roreth, in complaining,
Right so gan he about the chamber stert,
Smiting his breast aye with his fistes smert,
His head to the wall, his body to the ground,
Full oft he swapt, himselven to confound.

His eyen two for pity of his herte
Out stremeden as swift as welles twey,
The highe sobbes of his sorrowes smert
His speech him reft, unnethes might he sey,
"O death alas, why n'ilt thou do me dey?
Accursed be that day which that nature
Shope me to ben a lives creature."

But after whan the fury and all the rage
Which that his heart twist, and fast threst,
By length of time somewhat gan assuage,
Upon his bed he laid him doun to rest,
But tho begon his teares more out to brest,
That wonder is the body may suffise
To halfe this wo, which that I you devise.

Than said he thus : "Fortune alas, the while
What have I done? what have I thee agilt?
How mightest thou for routhe me begile?
Is there no grace? and shall I thus right,
Shall thus Creseide away for [illegible]ight
Alas, how mightest thou is that I sterve,
To ben to me thus of right naught do I serve."

"Have thus in teares gan distill
A licour out of allambike full fast,
And Pandarus gan hold his tongue still,
And to the ground his eyen downe he cast,
But nathelesse, thus thought he at last,
"What parde, rather than my fellow dey,
Yet shall I somewhat more unto him sey."

And said, "Friend, sens thou hast such distresse,
And sens thee list mine argumentes blame,
Why n'ilt thy selven helpe doen redresse,
And with thy manhood letten all this game,
Go ravish her, ne canst thou not for shame?
And either let her out of toune fare,
Or hold her still, and leave thy nice fare.

"Art thou in Troy, and hast non hardiment
To take a wight, whiche that loveth thee,
And would her selven been of thine assent,
Now is nat this a nice vanite?
Rise up anon, and let this weeping be,
And sith thou art a man, for in this hour
I woll been dead, or she shall ben our."

To this answerde him Troilus full soft,
And saied, "Ywis, my leve brother dere,
All this have I my selfe yet thought full oft,
And more thing than thou devisest here,

Sens ye Creseide and me have fully brought
Into your grace, and both our hertes sealed,
How may ye suffer alas, it be repealed?

"What I may done, I shal while I may dure
On live, in turment and in cruell paine,
This infortune, or this disaventure,
Alone as I was borne I woll complaine,
Ne never woll I seene it shine or raine,
But end I woll as Edippe in derkenesse
My sorrowfull life, and dien in distresse.

"O wery ghost, that errest to and fro,
Why nilt thou flien out of the wofullest
Body, that ever might on grounde go?
O soule, lurking in this wofull neste,
Fly forthout mine herte, and let it breste,
And follow alway Creseide thy lady dere,
Thy right place is now no lenger here.

"O wofull eien two, sens your disport
Was all to seene Creseides eyen bright,
What shall ye done, but for my discomfort
Stoden for naught, and wepen out your sight,
Sens she is queint, that wont was you to light,
In veine from this forth have I eyen twey
Yformed, sens your vertue is awey.

"O my Creseide, O lady soveraine
Of this wofull soule that thus crieth,
Who shall now yeven comfort to thy paine?
Alas, no wight, but whan mine herte dieth,
My spirit, which that so unto you hieth,
Receive in gree, for that shall aye you serve,
Forthy no force is, though the body sterve.

"O ye lovers, that high upon the whele
He sa[illegible]sette of Fortune in good aventure,
For well fele [illegible]hat ye finded aye love of stele,
And hope is lasse a[illegible]our life in joy endure,
Encreasen eke the causes [illegible]my sepulture,
So welaway, why n'ill mine herte [illegible]resteth there,
For as in love there is but little rest."

Pandare answerde, "Friend thou mayst for me
Done as thee list, but had I it so hote,
And thine estate, she should go with me,
Tho all this toun cried on this thing by note,
I n'old set at all that noise a grote,
For whan men have cried, than wol they roun,
Eke wonder last but nine deies never in toun.

"Devine not in reason aye so deepe,
Ne curtesly, but helpe thy selfe anone,
Bet is that other than thy selven wepe,
And namely, sens ye two ben al one,
Rise up, for by mine head she shall not gone,
And rather ben in blame a little yfound,
Than sterve here as a gnat withouten wound.

"It is no shame unto you, ne no vice,
Her to withholden, that ye loveth most,
Peraventure she might hold thee for nice,
To letten her go thus unto the Grekes hoste,
Think eke Fortune, as well thy selven woste,
Helpeth hardie man unto his emprise,
And weiveth wretches for hir cowardise.

"And though thy lady would alite her greve,
Thou shalt thy self thy peace hereafter make,
But as to me certaine I cannot leve,
That she would it as now for evill take,

Toward the bedde gan softly to gone,
So confuse, that he n'ist what to say,
For very wo, his wit was nigh away.

And with chere and looking all to torne,
For sorow of this, and with his armes folden,
He stood this wofull Troilus beforne,
And on his pitous face he gan beholden,
But so oft gan his herte colden,
Seeing his friend in wo, whose heavinesse
His herte slough, as thought him for distresse.

This wofull wight, this Troilus that felt
His friend Pandare ycomen him to see,
Gan as the snow ayenst the Sunne melt,
For which this wofull Pandare of pite
Gan for to weepe as tenderly as he:
And speechlesse thus ben these ilke twey,
That neither might for sorow o word sey.

But at the last, this wofull Troilus,
Nigh dead for smert, gan bresten out to rore,
And with a sorrowfull noise he said thus
Among his sobbes and his sighes sore,
"Lo, Pandare I am dead withouten more,
Hast thou not heard at parliament," he seide,
"For Antenor how lost is my Creseide?"

This Pandare full dead and pale of hew,
Full pitously answerde, and said, "Yes,
As wisely were it false as it is trew,
That I have heard, and wote all how it is,
O mercy God, who would have trowed this,
Who would have wend, that in so little a throw
Fortune our joy would have overthrow.

"For in this world there is no creature,
As to my dome, that ever saw ruine
Straunger than this, through case or aventure,
But who may all eschue or all devine,
Such is this world, forthy I thus define:
Ne trust no wight to find in Fortune
Aye property, her yeftes ben commune.

"But tell me this, why thou art now so mad
To sorrowen thus, why list thou in this wise,
A[illegible] desire all holy hast thou had,
Or he may [illegible]ut it ought inough suffise,
Thou must with [illegible]
Or upon case he may after thee send
Or thou beware, and shortly brother dere
Be glad, and let me werke in this mattere.

"For I shall shape it so, that sikerly
Thou shalt this night somtime in some manere
Come speaken with thy ladie prively,
And by her wordes eke, as by her chere,
Thou shalt full soone aperceive and well here
Of her entent, and in this case the best,
And fare now well, for in this point I rest."

The swifte fame, whiche that fals thinges
Equall reporteth, like the thinges true,
Was throghout Troy yfled, with prest winges,
Fro man to man, and made his tale all new,
How Calcas doughter with her bright hew,
At parliment without words more,
Ygraunted was in chaunge of Antenore.

The whiche tale anon right as Creseide
Had heard, she, which that of her father rought
(As in this case) right naught, ne whan he deide
Full busily to Jupiter besought

Yeve him mischance, that this tretis brought:
But shortly, least these tales sooth were,
She durst at no wight asken it for fere.

As she that had her herte and all her mind
On Troylus yset so wonder fast,
That al this world ne might her love unbind,
Ne Troylus out of her herte cast,
She would been his while that her life may last,
And she thus brenneth both in love and drede,
So that she n'ist what was best to rede.

But as men seene in toune, and all about,
That women usen hir friends to visite,
So to Creseide of women came a rout,
For pitous joy, and wenden her delite,
And with hir tales dere ynough a mite,
These women, which that in the citie dwell,
They set hem doune, and sayd as I shall tell.

(Quod, first that one) "I am glad truely,
Because of you, that shall your father see,"
Another sayd, "Ywis, so am not I,
For all too little hath she with us be:"
(Quod tho the third) "I hope ywis that she
Shall bringen us the peace on every side,
That whan she goth, almighty God her gide."

Tho wordes and tho womannish thinges
She herd hem right as thogh she thence were:
For God it wote, her herte on other thing is,
Although the body sat emong hem there,
Her advertence is alway els where,
For Troilus full fast her soule sought,
Withouten word, on him alway she thought.

These women that thus wenden her to please,
About naught gan all hir tales spend,
Such vanitie ne can done her none ease,
As she that all this meane while brend
Of other passion than they wend,
So that she felt almost her herte die
For wo, and werie of that companie.

For which might she no lenger restraine
Her teares, they gan so up to well,
That gave signes of her bitter paine,
In which her spirit was, and must dwell,
Remembring her from Heaven unto which Hell
She fallen was, sens she forgo the sight
Of Troilus, and sorrowfully she sight.

And thilke foeles, sitting her about,
Wende that she wept and sighed sore,
Because that she should out of the rout
Departen, and never play with hem more,
And they that had knowen her of yore,
See her so wepe, and thoght it was kindnesse,
And ech of hem wept eke for her distresse.

And busily they gonnen hir to comforten
On thing God wot, on which she litle thoght,
And with hir tales wenden her disporten,
And to be glad they ofte her besought,
But such an ease therwith they her wrought,
Right as a man is eased for to fele,
For ache of head, to clawen him on his hele.

But after all this nice vanitie,
They took hir leve, and home they wenten all,
Creseide full of sorrowfull pitie,
Into her chamber up went out of the hall,
And on her bedde she gan for dead to fall,
In purpose never thence for to rise,
And thus she wrought, as I shall you devise.

Hir ownded hair, that sonnish was of hew,
She rent, and eke her fingers long and smale
She wrong full oft, and bad God on her rew,
And with the death to do bote on her bale,
Her hewe whylom bright, that tho was pale,
Bare witnesse of her wo, and her constreint;
And thus she spake, sobbing in her compleint.

"Alas," (quod she) "out of this regioun,
I wofull wretch and infortuned wight,
And borne in cursed constellatioun,
Mote gon, and thus departen fro my knight,
Wo worth alas, that ilke daies light,
On which I saw him first with eyen twaine,
That causeth me, and I him all this paine."

Therwith the teares from her eyen two
Doune fell, as shoure in April swithe,
Her white breast she bet, and for the wo,
After the death she cried a thousand sithe,
Sens he that wont her wo was for to lithe,
She mote forgone, for which disaventure
She held her selfe a forlost creature.

She said, "How shall he done and I also
How should I live, if that I from him twin?
O dere herte eke that I love so,
Who shall that sorow slaen, that ye ben in?
O Calcas, father, thine be all this sin:
O mother mine, that cleped wert Argive,
Wo worth that day that thou me bare on live.

"To what fine should I live and sorowen thus?
How should a fish withouten water dure?
What is Creseide worth from Troilus?
How should a plant or lives creature
Live withouten his kind noriture?
For which full oft a by word here I sey,
That rootlesse mote greene soone dey.

"I shal done thus, sens neither sword ne dart
Dare I none handle, for the cruelte,
That ilke day that I fro you depart,
If sorow of that n'ill nat my bane be,
Than shall no meat ne drinke come in me,
Till I my soule out of my brest unsheath,
And thus my selven woll I done to death.

"And Troilus my clothes everychone
Shull blacke ben, in tokening, herte swete,
That I am as out of this world agone,
That wont was you to set in quiete,
And of mine order aye till death me mete,
The observaunce ever in your absence,
Shall sorrow ben complaint and abstinence.

"Mine herte and eke the woful ghost therein
Bequeath I with your spirit to complaine
Eternally, for they shall never twin,
For though in yearth twinned be we twaine,
Yet in the field of pitie, out of paine,
That hight Elisos, shall we ben yfere,
As Orpheus and Erudice his fere.

"Thus, herte mine, for Antenor alas,
I soone shall be chaunged, as I wene,
But how shull ye done in this sorowfull caas,
How shall your tender herte this sustene?

But herte mine, foryet this sorow and tene,
And me also, for soothly for to sey,
So ye well fare, I retche not to dey."

How might it ever redde ben or ysong
The plaint that she made in her distresse,
I n'ot, but as for me my little tong
If I discriven would her heavinesse,
It should make her sorrow seeme lesse
Than that it was, and childishly deface
Her high complaint, and therefore I it pace.

Pandare, which that sent from Troilus
Was unto Creseide, as ye have heard devise,
That for the best it was recorded thus,
And he full glad to done him that servise,
Unto Creseide in a full secret wise,
There as she lay in tourment and in rage,
Came her to tell all holy his message.

And fond that she her selven gan to grete
Full pitously, for with her salte teres,
Her breast and face ybathed was full wete,
Her mightie tresses of her sonnish heres
Unbroiden, hangen all about her eares,
Which yave him very signe of mattire
Of death, which that her herte gan desire.

Whan she him saw, she gan for sorrow anon
Her tearie face atwixt her armes hide,
For which this Pandare is so wo bigon,
That in the hous he might unneth abide,
As he that felt sorrow on every side,
For if Creseide had erst complained sore,
Tho gan she plaine a thousand times more.

And in her aspre plaint, thus she seide:
"Pandare, first of joies more than two
Was cause, causing unto me Creseide,
That now transmued ben in cruell wo,
Whether shall I say to you welcome or no?
That alderfirst me brought unto servise
Of love alas, that endeth in such wise.

"Endeth than love in wo? Yo or men lieth,
And all worldly blisse, as thinketh me,
The end of blisse aye sorrow it occupieth,
And who troweth not that it so be,
Let him upon me wofull wretche see,
That my selfe hate, and aye my birth curse,
Feeling alway, fro wicke I go to worse.

"Who so me seeth, he seeth sorow all atonis,
Paine, tourment, plaint, wo and distresse,
Out of my wofull body harme there none is,
As langour, anguish, cruell bitternesse,
Annoy, smart, drede, furie, and eke sicknesse,
I trow ywis from Heaven teares raine,
For pitie of my aspre and cruell paine."

"And thou my suster, full of discomfort,"
(Quod Pandarus) "what thinkest thou to do?
Why ne hast thou to thy selven some resport?
Why wilt thou thus thy selfe alas fordo?
Leave all this werke, and take now heed to
That I shall saine, and herken of good entent
This message, that by me Troilus you sent."

Tourned her tho Creseide a wo making,
So great, that it a death was for to see,
"Alas," (quod she) "what wordes may ye bring,
What woll my dere herte saine to mee,
Which that I drede nevermore to see,
Woll he have plaint or teares ere I wend?
I have ynough, if he thereafter send."

She was right such to seene in her visage,
As is that wight that men on beare bind,
Her face like of Paradis the image,
Was all ychaunged in another kind,
The play, the laughter men were wont to find
On hir, and eke her joyes everichone
Ben fled, and thus lieth Creseide alone.

About her eyen two, a purpre ring
Bitrent, in soothfast tokening of her paine,
That to behold it was a deadly thing,
For which Pandare might nat restraine
The teares from his eyen for to raine,
But nathelesse as he best might he seide
From Troilus these wordes to Creseide.

"Lo, nece, I trow ye han heard all how
The king with other lordes for the best,
Hath made eschaunge of Antenor and you,
That cause is of this sorow and this unrest,
But how this case doth Troilus molest,
This may none yearthly mannes tongue say,
For very wo, his wit is all away.

"For which we have so sorowed, he and I,
That into little it had us both slawe,
But through my counsaile this day finally,
He somewhat is fro weeping withdrawe,
And seemeth me that he desireth fawe
With you to ben all night for to devise
Remedie of this, if there were any wise.

"This short and plain, theffect of my message,
As ferforth as my wit can comprehend,
For ye that ben of tourment in such rage,
May to no long prologue as now entend.
And hereupon ye may answer him send,
And for the love of God my nece dere,
So leave this wo, or Troilus be here."

"Great is my wo," (quod she) and sighed sore,
As she that feeleth deadly sharpe distresse,
But yet to me his sorrow is mokell more,
That love him bet than he himselfe I gesse,
Alas, for me hath he such hevinesse,
Can he for me so pitously complaine,
Ywis this sorow doubleth all my paine.

"Grevous to me God wot is for to twin,"
(Quod she) "but yet it harder is to me,
To seene that sorrow which that he is in,
For well wot I, it woll my bane be,
And die I woll in certaine tho" (quod she:)
"But bid him come, er deth that thus me threteth,
Drive out the ghost which in mine herte beteth."

These wordes said, she on her armes two
Fell gruffe, and gan to weepen pitously:
(Quod Pandarus) "Alas, why doe ye so?
Sens ye well wote the time is fast by
That he shall come, arise up hastely,
That he you nat biwopen thus ne find,
But ye woll have him wode out of his mind.

"For wist he that ye farde in this manere,
He would himselfe slea: and if I wend
To have this fare, he should not come here,
For all the good that Priam may dispend:

For to what fine he would anon pretend,
That know I well, and forthy yet I sey,
So leave this sorow, or plainly he woll dey.

" And shapeth you his sorow for to abredge,
And nat encrease, lefe nece swete,
Beth rather to him cause of plat than edge,
And with some wisdome ye his sorrowes bete :
What helpeth it to weepen full a strete,
Or though ye both in salt teares dreint ?
Bet is a time of cure aye than of pleint.

" I meane thus, whan I him hither bring,
Sens ye be wise, and both of one assent,
So shapeth how to distourbe your going,
Or come ayen soone after ye be went,
Women ben wise, in short avisement,
And let seene how your wit shall availe,
And what that I may helpe, it shall not faile."

" Go," (quod Creseide) " and, uncle, truely
I shall done all my might me to restraine
From weeping in his sight, and busily
Him for to glad, I shall done all my paine,
And in my herte seeken every vaine,
If to his sore there may ben founden salve,
It shall nat lacke certaine on mine halve."

Goth Pandarus, and Troilus he sought,
Till in a temple he found him all alone,
As he that of his life no lenger rought,
But to the pitous goddes everichone,
Full tenderly he praid, and made his mone,
To done him soone out of the world to pace,
For well he thoght there was none other grace.

And shortly all the soothe for to sey,
He was so fallen in dispaire that day,
That utterly he shope him for to dey,
For right thus was his argument alway,
He saied he nas but lorne, welaway,
" For all that commeth, commeth by necessitie,
Thus to ben lorne, it is my destinie.

" For certainly, this wote I well," he said,
" That foresight of devine purveiaunce
Had seen alway me to forgone Creseide,
Sens God seethe every thing out of doutance
And hem disposeth through his ordinance,
In his merites soothly for to be,
As they shull comen by predestine.

" But nathelesse, alas, whom shall I leve,
For there ben greate clerkes many one,
That destinie, through argumentes preve,
And some saine, that nedely there is none,
But that free choice is yeven us everychone :
O welaway, so sligh arn clerkes old,
That I n'ot whose opinion I may hold.

" For some men sain, that God seeth all beforne,
Ne God may nat deceived ben parde,
Than mote it fallen, though men had it sworn,
That purveiaunce hath seene beforne to be,
Wherefore I say, that from eterne if he
Hath wist beforn our thought eke as our dede,
We have no free choice, as these clerkes rede.

" For other thought, nor other deed also,
Might never been, but such as purveyaunce,
Which may nat been deceived never mo,
Hath feled biforne, withouten ignoraunce,
For if there might ben a variaunce
To writhen out fro Goddes purveying,
There nere no prescience of thing comming.

" But it were rather an opinion
Uncertaine, and no stedfast foreseeing,
And certes that were an abusion,
That God should have no perfite clere weting
More than we men that have doutous wening,
But such an errour upon God to gesse,
Were false, and foule, and wicked cursednesse.

" Eke this is an opinion of some,
That have hir top ful high and smooth yshore,
They saine right thus, that thing is nat to come,
For that the prescience hath seene before
That it shall come, but they sain that therfore
That it shall come, therefore the purveyaunce
Wote it beforne withouten ignoraunce.

" And in this manner this necessite
Retourneth in his part contrary againe,
For needfully behoveth it nat to be,
That thilke thinges fallen in certaine
That ben purveied, but needfully as they saine
Behoveth it that thinges which that fall,
That they in certaine ben purveyed all.

" I meane as though I laboured me in this,
To inquire which thing cause of which thing be,
As whether that the prescience of God is
The certaine cause of the necessite
Of thinges that to comen be parde,
Or if necessitie of thing comming,
Be cause certaine of the purveying.

" But now ne enforce I me not in shewing,
How the order of the causes stant, but well wot I
That it behoveth, that the befalling
Of thinges wiste before certainly,
Be necessarie, all seeme it not thereby,
That prescience put falling necessaire
To thing to come, all fall it foule or faire.

" For if there sit a man yond on a see,
Than by necessitie behoveth it,
That certes thine opinion sooth be,
That wenest or conjectest that he sit,
And further over, now ayenward yet,
Lo right so is it on the part contrarie,
As thus, now hearken, for I woll nat tarie.

" I say, that if the opinion of thee
Be sooth for that he sit, than say I this,
That he mote sitten by necessitie,
And thus necessitie in either is,
For in him nede of sitting is ywis,
And in the nede of sooth, and thus forsoth
There mote necessitie ben in you both.

" But thou maist saine the man sit nat therfore,
That thine opinion of his sitting sooth is,
But rather for the man sate there before,
Therefore is thine opinion sooth ywis,
And I say though the cause of sooth of this
Commeth of his sitting, yet necessitee
Is enterchaunged both in him and in thee.

" Thus in the same wise out of doutaunce,
I may well maken, as it seemeth me,
My reasoning of Goddes purveyaunce,
And of the thinges that to comen be,

By whiche reason men may well ysee,
That thilke thinges that in earth yfall,
That by necessitie they comen all.

"For although that forthing shall come ywis
Therefore is it purveyed certainely,
Nat that it commeth, for it purveyed is,
Yet nathelesse behoveth it needfully,
That thing to come be purveyed truly,
Or else thinges that purveyed be,
That they betiden by necessite.

"And this suffiseth right ynough certaine,
For to destroy our free choise everydell,
But now is this abusion to saine,
That falling of the thinges temporell,
Is cause of the goddes prescience eternell;
Now truely that is a false sentence,
That thing to com shuld cause his prescience.

"What might I wene, and I had such a thought?
But that God purveieth thing that is to come,
For that it is to come, and else nought:
So might I wene, that thinges all and some,
That whylome ben befall and overcome,
Ben cause of thilke soveraine purveyaunce,
That forwote all, withouten ignoraunce.

"And over all this, yet say I more thereto,
That right as whan I wote there is a thing,
Ywis that thing mote needfully be so,
Eke right so, whan I wot a thing comming,
So mote it come; and thus they befalling
Of thinges that ben wist before the tide,
They mowe not ben eschewed on no side."

Than said he thus, "Almighty Jove in trone,
That wotest of all this thing the soothfastnesse,
Rew on my sorrow and do me dien sone,
Or bring Creseide and me fro this distresse."
And while he was in all this heavinesse,
Disputing with himselfe in this matere,
Came Pandare in, and said as ye may here.

"O mighty God" (quod Pandarus) "in trone,
Eigh, who saw ever a wise man faren so?
Why Troilus, what thinkest thou to done?
Hast thou such lust to ben thine owne fo?
What, parde, yet is nat Creseide ago,
Why list thee so thy selfe fordone for drede,
That in thine head thine eyen semen dede.

"Hast thou nat lived many a yere beforne
Withouten her, and farde full well at ease?
Art thou for her and for none other borne.
Hath Kind thee wrought al only her to please?
Let be and thinke right thus in thy disease,
That in the dice right as ther fallen chaunces,
Right so in love there come and gon plesaunces.

"And yet this is a wonder most of all,
Why thou thus sorowest, sith thou wost nat yet
Touching her going, how that it shall fall,
Ne if she can her selfe distourben it,
Thou hast nat yet assaied all her wit;
A man may all betime his necke bede
Whan it shall off, and sorowen at the nede.

"Forthy, take hede of all that I shall say,
I have with her yspoke, and long ybe,
So as accorded was betwixe us twey,
And evermore me thinketh thus, that she
Hath somewhat in her hertes privite,
Wherewith she can, if I shall aright rede,
Disturbe all this, of which thou art in drede.

"For which my counsell is, whan it is night,
Thou to her go, and make of this an end,
And blisfull Juno, through her great might,
Shall (as I hope) her grace unto us send,
Mine herte seith certaine she shall nat wend,
And forthy, put thine herte awhile in rest,
And hold thy purpose, for it is the best."

This Troilus answerde, and sighed sore,
"Thou saist right well, and I will do right so,"
And what him list, he said unto him more,
And whan that it was time for to go,
Full prively himselfe withouten mo
Unto her came, as he was wont to done,
And how they wrought, I shall you tell soone.

Sooth is, that whan they gonne first to mete,
So gan the paine hir hertes for to twist,
That neither of hem other mighte grete,
But hem in armes tooke, and after kist,
The lasse wofull of hem bothe nist
Where that he was, ne might o word outbring,
As I said erst, for wo and for sobbing.

The wofull teares that they leten fall,
As bitter weren out of teares kind
For paine, as is ligne aloes, or gall,
So bitter teares wept not as I find
The wofull Mirra, through the barke and rind,
That in this world there n'is so hard an herte,
That n'olde have rewed on her paines smart.

But whan hir wofull wery ghostes twaine
Returned ben, there as hem ought to dwell,
And that somewhat to weken gan the paine
By length of plaint, and ebben gan the well
Of hir teares, and the herte unswell,
With broken voice, al horse for shright, Creseid
To Troilus these ilke wordes seid.

"O Jove, I die, and mercy thee besech,
Helpe Troilus:" and therewithal her face
Upon his brest she laid, and lost her speech,
Her wofull spirite from his proper place
Right with the worde away in point to pace,
And thus she lith, with hewes pale and grene,
That whilom fresh and fairest was to sene.

This Troilus that on her gan behold,
Cleping her name, and she lay as for deed,
Withouten answere, and felt her limmes cold,
Her eien throwen upward to her heed:
This sorowful man can now non other rede,
But oft time her colde mouth he kist,
Where him was wo, God and himself it wist.

He riseth him up, and long straite he her leide,
For signe of life, for aught he can or may,
Can he none finde, in nothing of Creseide,
For which his song full oft is "Welaway:"
But whan he saw that spechlesse she lay,
With sorowful voice, and herte of blisse al bare,
He said, how she was fro this world yfare.

So after that he long had her complained,
His hondes wrong, and said that was to sey,
And with his teeres salt her breast berained,
He gan tho teeres wipen off full drey,

And pitously gan for the soule prey,
And said, "Lord, that set art in thy throne,
Rewe eke on me, for I shall folow her sone."

She colde was, and without sentement,
For ought he wote, for brethe felte he none,
And this was him a preignant argument,
That she was forth out of this world agone:
And whan he saw there was non other wonne,
He gan her limmes dresse, in such manere,
As men don hem that shall ben laide on bere.

And after this, with sterne and cruel herte,
His swerde anon out of his sheth he twight,
Him selfe to sleen, how sore that him smart,
So that his soule, her soule folowen might,
There as the dome of Minos would it dight,
Sith love and cruel fortune it ne would,
That in this world he lenger liven should.

Than said he thus, fulfilde of high disdaine,
"O cruel Jove, and thou Fortune adverse,
This is all and some, that falsly have ye slaine
Creseide, and sith ye may do me ne werse,
Fie on your might and werkes so diverse,
Thus cowardly ye shull me never winne,
There shall no deth me fro my lady twinne.

"For I this world, sith ye have slain her thus,
Woll let, and folow her spirite low or hie,
Shal never lover saine that Troilus,
Dare nat for feare with his lady die,
For certaine I woll beare her companie,
But sithe ye wol nat suffre us liven here,
Yet suffreth that our soules ben ifere.

"And thou citie, in which I live in wo,
And thou Priam, and brethren al ifere,
And thou my mother, farewell, for I go,
And Attropos make redy thou my bere:
And thou Creseide, O swete herte dere,
Receive now my spirite," would he sey
With swerde at herte, all redy for to dey.

But as God would, of swough she abraide,
And gan to sighe, and Troilus she cride,
And he answerde, "Lady mine Creseide,
Live ye yet?" and let his swerde doun glide:
"Ye herte mine, that thanked be Cupide,"
(Quod she) and therewithal she sore sight,
And he began to glade her as he might.

Toke her in armes two and kist her oft,
And her to glad, he did al his entent,
For which her gost, that flikered aie a loft,
Into her wofull herte ayen it went:
But at the last, as that her eye glent
Aside, anon she gan his sworde aspie,
As it lay bare, and gan for feare crie.

And asked him why he had it out draw,
And Troilus anon the cause her told,
And how himself therwith he wold have slain,
For which Creseide upon him gan behold,
And gan him in her armes faste fold,
And said, "O mercy God, lo, which a dede,
Alas, how nigh we weren bothe dede.

"Than if I nadde spoken, as grace was,
Ye would have slain your selfe anon?" (quod she.)
"Ye doutlesse:" and she answerde, "Alas,
For by that ilke lorde that made me,
I n'olde a furlong way on live have be,
After your deth, to have ben crouned quene
Of al the londe the Sunne on shineth shene.

"But with this selve sword, which that here is
My selfe I would have slain" (quod she) "tho:
But ho, for we have right inough of this,
And let us rise and straite to bedde go:
And there let us speken of our wo,
For by that morter, which that I see brenne,
Know I ful well, that day is nat farre henne."

Whan they wer in hir bed in armes fold,
Naught was it like tho nightes here beforne,
For pitously each other gan behold,
As they that hadden al hir blisse ylorne,
Bewailing aie the day that they were borne,
Til at the last, this sorowful wight Creseide,
To Troilus these ilke wordes seide.

"Lo, herte mine, wel wote ye this" (quod she)
"That if a wight alway his wo complaine,
And seketh nat how holpen for to be,
It n'is but folie, and encreace of paine:
And sens that here assembled be we twaine,
To finde bote of wo that we ben in,
It were time al sone to begin.

"I am a woman, as ful wel ye wotte,
And as I am avised sodainly,
So wol I tel you, while it is hotte,
Me thinketh thus, that neyther ye nor I,
Ought halfe this wo to maken skilfully,
For there is art inough for to redresse,
That yet is misse, and sleen is hevinesse.

"Soth is, the wo the whiche we ben inne,
For aught I wote, for nothing eles is,
But for the cause that we should twinne,
Considred al, there n'is no more amis:
And what is than a remedy unto this?
But that we shape us sone for to mete,
This al and some, my dere herte swete.

"Now that I shall wel bringen it about
To comen ayen, sone after that I go,
Thereof am I no maner thing in dout,
For dredelesse, within a weke or two
I shal ben here: and that it may be so,
By all right, and in wordes few,
I shal you wel an heape of waies shew.

"For which I woll nat maken long sermon,
For time ylost may not recovered be,
But I will go to my conclusion,
And to the best, in aught that I can see:
And for the love of God foryeve it me,
If I speake aught ayenst your hertes rest,
For truely I speake it for the best.

"Making alway a protestation,
That nowe these wordes which I shal say,
N'is but to shewe you my mocion,
To find unto our helpe the beste way,
And take it no otherwise I pray,
For in effect, what so ye me commaund,
That wol I done, for that is no demaund.

"Now herkeneth this, ye have wel understond
My going graunted is by parliment,
So ferforth that it may not ben withstond,
For al this world, as by my judgement:

And sithe there helpeth none avisement,
To letten it, lette it passe out of mind,
And let us shape a better way to find.

"The sothe is, the twinning of us twaine,
Wol us disease, and cruelly anoie:
But him behoveth sometime have a paine,
That serveth love, if that he woll have joie:
And sith I shall no farther out of Troie
Than I may ride ayen on halfe a morow,
It ought lasse causen us for to sorow.

"So as I shal nat so ben hid in mew,
That day by day, mine owne herte dere,
Sens well ye wote that it is now a trew,
Ye shal ful wel al mine estate here:
And er that truce is done, I shal ben here,
Than have ye bothe Antenor ywonne,
And me also, bethe glad now if ye conne.

"And thinke right thus, Creseide is now agon,
But what, she shal come hastely ayen,
And whan alas! by God, lo, right anon
Er daies ten, this dare I safely saine,
And than at erste, shal we be so faine,
So as we shal togithers ever dwell,
That all this world ne might our blisse tell.

"I see that oft time, there as we ben now
That for the best, our counsaile for to hide,
Ye speke nat with me, nor I with you
In fourtenight, ne see you go ne ride:
May ye nat ten daies than abide,
For mine honour, in such aventure!
Ywis ye mowe, or eles lite endure.

"Ye know eke how that all my kin is here,
But if that onely it my father be,
And eke mine other thinges al yfere,
And namely my dere herte ye,
Whom that I n'olde leaven for to see,
For all this world, as wide as it hath space,
Or eles see I never Joves face.

"Why trowe ye my father in this wise
Coveiteth so to see me, but for drede,
Lest in this toune that folkes me dispise,
Bicause of him, for his unhappy dede?
What wote my father what life that I lede,
For if he wist in Troie how well I fare,
Us neded for my wending nat to care.

"Ye see, that every day eke more and more,
Men treate of peace, and it supposed is,
That men the quene Heleine shall restore,
And Grekes us restore that is mis:
Though there ne were comfort none but this,
That men purposen peace on every side,
Ye may the better at ease of herte abide.

"For if that it be peace, mine herte dere,
The nature of the peace mote nedes drive,
That men must entrecomune yfere,
And to and fro eke ride and gone as blive,
Al day as thicke as been flien from an hive,
And every wight have liberty to bleve,
Where as him list, the bet withouten leve.

"And tho so be that peace there may bene none,
Yet hither, though ther never peace no were,
I must come, for whider should I gone,
Or how mischaunce should I dwell there
Among tho men of armes ever in fere,
For which, as wisely God my soule rede,
I can nat sene wherof ye should drede.

"Have here another way, if it so be
That all this thing ne may you not suffice,
My father, as he knowen well parde,
Is olde, and eke full of covetise,
And I right now have founden al the gise,
Withouten nette, wherwith I shal him hent,
And herkeneth now, if that ye woll assent.

"Lo, Troilus, men saine, that ful hard it is
The wolfe ful, and the wedder hole to have,
This is to saine, that men full oft ywis,
Mote spenden parte, the remnant for to save:
For aie with gold, men may the herte grave,
Of him that set is upon covetise,
And how I meane, I shal it you devise.

"The moveable, which that I have in this toun,
Unto my father shall I take, and say,
That right for trust, and for salvatioun,
It sent is from a frende of his or tway,
The whiche frendes fervently him pray,
To sende after more and that in hie,
While that this toun stant thus in jeopardie.

"And that shall be of gold an huge quantite,
Thus shal I sain, but lest folke it aspide,
This may be sent by no wight but by me:
I shal eke shewen him, if peace betide,
What frendes that I have on every side,
Toward the court, to don the wrathe pace,
Of Priamus, and do him stonde in grace.

"So what for o thing and for other, swete,
I shall him so enchaunten with my sawes,
That right in Heven his soule is, shal he mete,
For all Apollo, or his clerkes lawes,
Or calculing, availeth not three hawes:
Desire of gold shall so his soule blend,
That as me list, I shall well make an end.

"And if he would aught by his sorte it preve,
If that I lie, in certaine I shall fond
To disturben him, and plucke him by the sleve,
Making his sorte and bearen him on hond,
He hath nat well the goddes understond,
For goddes speke in amphibologies,
And for o sothe, they tellen twenty lies.

"Eke drede fond first goddes, I suppose,
Thus shall I saine, and that his coward herte,
Made him amis the goddes text to glose,
Whan he for ferde out of Delphos stert:
And but I make him sone to convert,
And done my rede, within a day or twey,
I wol to you oblige me to dey."

And truely, as written wel I find,
That al this thing was said of good entent,
And that her herte trewe was and kind
Towardes him, and spake right as she ment,
And that she starfe for wo nigh whan she went,
And was in purpose ever to be trewe,
Thus writen they that of her werkes knew.

This Troilus, with herte and eeres sprad,
Herde all this thing devised to and fro,
And verily it seemed that he had
The selve witte, but yet to let her go

His herte misyave him evermo,
But finally he gan his herte wrest,
To trusten her, and toke it for the best.

For which the great fury of his penaunce,
Wasqueint with hope, and therewith hem betwene
Began for joye the amorous daunce,
And as the birdes, whan the Sunne shene,
Deliten in hir songe, in leves greene,
Right so the wordes, that they spake yfere,
Deliten hem, and made hir hertes chere.

But nathelesse, the wending of Creseide,
For all this world may nat out of his mind,
For which full oft he pitously her preide,
That of her heste he might her trewe find:
And said her, "Certes if ye be kind,
And but ye come at daie set, in Troie,
Ne shal I never have heale, honor, ne joie.

"For al so sothe as Sunne uprist to morow,
And God so wisely thou me woful wretch
To reste bring, out of this cruel sorow,
I wol my selven slee, if that ye dretch:
But of my death though little be to retch,
Yet er that ye me causen so to smart,
Dwel rather here, my owne swete herte.

"For truely mine owne lady dere,
The sleightes yet, that I have herd you stere,
Ful shapely ben to fallen all yfere,
For thus men saith, that one thinketh the bere,
But al another thinketh the ledere,
Your sire is wise, and said is out of drede,
Men may the wise out renne, and not out rede.

"It is full harde to halten unespied
Before a crepil, for he can the craft,
Your father is in sleight as Argus eied,
For al be it that his movable is him biraft,
His olde sleight is yet so with him laft,
Ye shal nat blende him for your womanhede
Ne faine aright, and that is all my drede.

"I n'ot if peace shal evermo betide,
But peace or no, for ernest ne for game,
I wote sith Calcas on the Grekes side
Hath ones ben, and lost so foule his name,
Ne dare no more come here ayen for shame,
For which that we, for ought I can espie,
To trusten on, n'is but a fantasie.

"Ye shal eke seen your father shall you glose,
To ben a wife, and as he can well prech,
He shal some Greke so preise and wel alose,
That ravishen he shal you with his spech:
Or do you done by force, as he shall tech,
And Troilus on whom ye n'il have routh,
Shall causelesse so sterven in his trouth.

"And over al this your father shall dispise
Us al, and saine this cite is but lorne,
And that th'assege never shall arise,
For why? the Grekes have it al sworne,
Til we ben slaine, and doune our walles torne,
And thus he shall you with his wordes fere,
That aie drede I, that ye wol bleven there.

"Ye shall eke sene so many a lusty knight,
Among the Grekes ful of worthinesse,
And ech of hem, with herte, wit and might
To pleasen you, done al his businesse,
That ye shull dullen of the rudenesse
Of sely Troians, but if routhe
Remorde you, or vertue of your trouthe.

"And this to me so grevouse is to thinke,
That fro my brest it wol my soule rende,
Ne dredelesse, in me there may nat sinke
O good opinion, if that ye wende,
For why? your fathers sleight woll us shende,
And if ye gone, as I have tolde you yore,
So thinke I nam but deed, withouten more.

"For which with humble, true and pitous herte
A thousand times mercy I you pray,
So reweth on mind aspre paines smart,
And doth somwhat, as that I shall you say:
And let us steale away betwixt us tway,
And thinke that foly is, whan a man may chese
For accident, his substaunce for to lese.

"I meane thus, that sens we mowe or day
Wel steale away, and ben togither so,
What wit were it to putten in assay,
(In case ye shoulden to your father go)
If that ye mighten come ayen or no:
Thus meane I, that were a great follie
To put that sikernesse in jeopardie.

"And vulgarly to speken of substaunce,
Of treasour may we both with us lede,
Ynough to live in honour and pleasaunce,
Til unto time that we shall ben dede,
And thus we may eschewen all this drede,
For every other waie ye can record,
Mine herte ywis may therewith nat acord.

"And hardely ne dredeth no poverte,
For I have kin and frendes eles where,
That though we comen in our bare sherte,
Us should never lacke golde ne geere,
But ben honoured while we dwelten there,
And go we anone, for as in mine entent,
This is the best, if that ye woll assent."

Creseide with a sigh, right in this wise
Answerde, "Ywis, my dere herte trew,
Ye may well steale away, as ye devise,
And finden such unthrifty waies new:
But afterward full sore it woll us rew,
And helpe me God so at my most nede,
As causelesse ye suffren al this drede.

"For thilke day that I for cherishing,
Or drede of father, or for any other wight,
Or for estate, delite, or for wedding,
Be false to you, my Troilus, my knight,
Saturnus doughter Juno, through her might,
As wood as Achamante do me dwell
Eternally with Stix in the pit of Hell.

"And this on every God celestiall
I swere it you and eke on eche goddesse,
On every nimphe, and deite infernall,
On satiry and fauny more and lesse,
That halve goddes ben of wildernesse,
And Attropos my threde of life to brest,
If I be false, now trowe me if you lest.

"And thou Simois, that, as an arowe, clere
Through Troy renneet, aie dounward to the see,
Be witnesse of this word, that saied is here,
That thilke day that I untrewe be

To Troilus, mine owne herte fre,
That thou return backwarde to thy well,
And I with body and soule sinke to Hell.

"But that ye speake away thus for to go,
And letten all your frendes, God forbede,
For any woman that ye shoulden so,
And namely, sens Troy hath now such nede
Of helpe, and eke of o thing taketh hede,
If this were wist, my life lay in ballaunce,
And your honor, God shild us fro mischaunce.

"And if so be that peace hereafter be take,
As all day happeth after angre game,
Why lord the sorow and wo ye wolden make,
That ye ne durst come ayen for shame,
And ere that ye jeoparden so your name,
Beth nat too hasty in this hotte fare,
For hasty man ne wanteth never care.

"What trowe ye the people eke all about
Would of it say? it is full light to arede,
They woulden say, and swere it out of dout,
That love ne drave you nat to done this dede
But lust voluptuous, and coward drede,
Thus were all lost ywis, mine herte dere
Your honour, whiche that now shineth clere.

"And also thinketh on mine honeste,
That floureth yet, how foul I should it shend,
And with what filth it spotted shulde be,
If in this forme I should with you wend,
Ne though I lived unto the worldes end,
My name should I never ayenward win,
Thus were I lost, and that were routh and sin.

"And forthy, slee with reason all this hete,
Men sain, the suffraunt overcommeth parde,
Eke whoso woll have lefe, he lefe mote lete,
Thus maketh vertue of necessite
By patience, and thinke that lord is he
Of fortune aye, that naught woll of her retch,
And she ne daunteth no wight but a wretch.

"And trusteth this, that certes, herte swete,
Or Phebus suster, Lucina the shene,
The Lion passe out of this Aritee,
I woll been here, withouten any wene,
I meane, as helpe me Juno, Heavens quene,
The tenth day, but if that death me assaile
I woll you seene, withouten any faile."

"And now so this be sooth," (quod Troilus)
"I shall well suffer unto the tenth day,
Sens that I see that nede it mote ben thus,
But for the love of God, if be it may,
So let us stealen prively away:
For ever in one, as for to live in rest,
Mine herte saieth that it woll be the best."

"O mercy God, what life is this?" (quod she)
"Alas, ye slea me thus for very tene,
I see well now that ye mistrusten me,
For by your wordes it is well ysene:
Now for the love of Cinthia the shene,
Mistrust me nat thus causeless for routh,
Sens to be true I have you plight my trouth.

"And thinketh well, that sometime it is wit
To spend a time, a time for to win,
Ne parde lorne am I nat fro you yet,
Though that we ben a day or two atwin:
Drive out tho fantasies you within,
And trusteth me, and leaveth eke your sorow,
Or here my trouth, I wol nat live til morow.

"For if ye wist how sore it doth me smart,
Ye would cesse of this, for God thou wost
The pure spirit weepeth in mine herte
To seen you weepen, which that I love most,
And that I mote gone unto the Greekes host,
Ye, nere it that I wist a remedy
To com ayen, right here I wolde dy.

"But certes I am not so nice a wight,
That I ne can imaginen a way
To come ayen that day that I have hight,
For who may holden a thing that woll away,
My father naught, for all his queint play,
And by my thrift, my wending out of Troy
Another day shall tourne us all to joy.

"Forthy, with all mine herte I you beseke,
If that you list done aught for my prayere,
And for the love which that I love you eke,
That ere I departe fro you here,
That of so good a comfort and a chere
I may you seen, that ye may bring at rest
My herte, whiche is at point to brest.

"And over all this I pray you," (quod she tho)
"My owne hertes soothfast suffisaunce,
Sith I am thine all hole withouten mo,
That while that I am absent, no pleasaunce
Of other, do me fro your remembraunce:
For I am ever agast, for why? men rede,
That love is thing aye full of busie drede.

"For in this world there liveth lady none,
If that ye were untrue, as God defend,
That so betrayed were, or wo begon,
As I, that all trouthe in you entend:
And doubtlesse, if that iche other wend,
I nere but dead, and ere ye cause find,
For Goddes love, so beth ye nat unkind."

To this answered Troilus and seide,
"Now God to whom there n'is no cause ywrie,
Me glad, as wis I never unto Creseide,
Sith thilke day I saw her first with eye,
Was false, ne never shall till that I die,
At short wordes, well ye may me leve,
I can no more, it shall be found at preve."

"Graunt mercy, good herte mine, ywis" (quod she)
"And blisful Venus let me never sterve,
Er I may stonde of pleasaunce in degre,
To quite him well, that so well can deserve:
And while that God my wit will me conserve
I shall so done, so true I have you found,
That aie honour to meward shall rebound.

"For trusteth well, that your estate royall,
Ne vain delite, nor onely worthinesse
Of you in werre or turnay marciall,
Ne pompe, array, nobley, or eke richesse:
Ne made me to rue on your distresse,
But moral vertue, grounded upon trouth,
That was the cause I first had on you routh.

"Eke gentle herte, and manhood that ye had,
And that ye had (as me thought) in dispite
Every thing that sowned in to bad,
As rudenesse, and peoplish appetite

And that your reason bridled your delite,
This made aboven every creature,
That I was yours, and shall while I may dure.

"And this may length of yeres nat fordo,
Ne remuablest fortune deface,
But Jupiter, that of his might may do
The sorowfull to be glad, so yeve us grace,
Er nightes tenne to meten in this place,
So that it may your herte and mine suffise,
And fareth now well, for time is that ye rise."

And after that they long yplained had,
And oft ikist, and straite in armes fold,
The day gan rise, and Troilus him clad,
And rufully his lady gan behold:
As he that felt deathes cares cold,
And to her grace he gan him recommaund,
Where he was wo, this hold I no demaund.

For mannes hedde imaginen ne can,
Ne entendement consider, ne tongue tell
The cruell paines of this sorowfull man,
That passen every torment doune in Hell:
For whan he sawe that she ne might dwell,
Which that his soule out his herte rent,
Withouten more, out of the chamber he went.

EXPLICIT LIBER QUARTUS.

INCIPIT LIBER QUINTUS.

B. V. V. 1—95

APPROCHEN gan the fatall destine,
That Joves hath in disposicioun,
And to you angry Parcas sustren thre,
Committeth to done execucioun,
For which Creseide must out of the toun,
And Troilus shall dwell forth in pine,
Till Lachesis his threde no lenger twine.

The golden tressed Phebus high on loft,
Thrise had all with his beames clere
The snowes molte, and Zephirus as oft
Ibrought ayen the tender leaves grene:
Sens that the sonne of Eccuba the quene
Began to love her first, for whom his sorrow
Was all, that she departe should a morow.

Full redy was at prime Diomede,
Creseide unto the Grekes hoste to lede,
For sorow of which, she felt her herte blede,
As she that n'iste what was best to rede:
And truely, as men in bokes rede,
Men wiste never woman have the care,
Ne was so lothe out of a toune to fare.

This Troilus withouten rede or lore,
As man that hath his joies eke forlore,
Was waiting on his lady evermore,
As she that was sothfast croppe and more,
Of all his lust or joyes here tofore:
But Troilus, now farwell all thy joie,
For shalt thou never seen her eft in Troie.

Soth is, that while he bode in this manere,
He gan his wo full manly for to hide,
That well unneth it seen was in his chere,
But at the yate there she should out ride,
With certain folke he hoved her to abide,
So wo bigon, all would he not him plain,
That on his horse unneth he sate for pain.

For ire he quoke, so gan his herte gnaw,
Whan Diomede on horse gan him dight,
And sayd unto himselfe this ilke saw,
"Alas," (quod he) "thus foule a wretchednesse
Why suffre I it? Why n'ill I it redresse?
Were it nat bet at ones for to die,
Than evermore in langour thus to cric?

"Why n'ill I make at ones rich and poore,
To have inough to done er that she go?
Why n'ill I bring all Troie upon a roore?
Why n'ill I slaen this Diomede also?
Why n'ill I rather with a man or two,
Steale her away? Why woll I this endure?
Why n'ill I helpen to mine owne cure?"

But why he n'olde done so fell a deede,
That shall I sain, and why him list it spare,
He had in herte alway a maner drede,
Lest that Creseide, in rumour of this fare,
Should have ben slain, lo, this was al his care,
And eles certain, as I sayed yore,
He had it done withouten wordes more.

Creseide whan she redy was to ride,
Full sorowfully she sighed, and sayd "Alas,"
But forth she mote, for aught that may betide,
And forth she rideth full sorowfully apaas:
Ther is no other remedy in this caas:
What wonder is, though that her sore smart
Whan she forgoeth her owne swete herte?

This Troilus in gise of curtesie,
With hauke on hond, and with an huge rout
Of knightes, rode and did her companie,
Passing all the valey ferre without,
And ferther would have ridden out of doubt,
Full faine, and wo was him to gone so sone,
But tourne he must, and it was eke to done.

And right with that was Antenor ycome,
Out of the Grekes hoste, and every wight
Was of him glad, and sayd he was welcome,
And Troilus, al nere his herte light,
He pained him, with all his full might
Him to with hold of weping at least,
And Antenor he kist, and made feast.

And therewithal he must his leave take,
And cast his eye upon her pitously,
And nere he rode, his cause for to make,
To take her by the honde al soberly:
And Lorde so she gan wepen tenderly,
And he full soft and slighly gan her seie,
"Now hold your day, and doe me not to deie."

With that his courser tourned he about,
With face pale, and unto Diomede
No worde he spake, ne none of all his rout,
Of which the sonne of Tideus toke hede,
As he that kouthe more than the crede,
In soche a craft, and by the rein her hent,
And Troilus to Troie homewardes went.

This Diomede, that lad her by the bridell,
Whan that he saw the folke of Troy away,
Thought, "All my labor shall not been on idell,
If that I may, for somewhat shall I say:

For at the worst, it short maie our way,
I have heard say eke, times twise twelve,
He is a foole that woll foryete him selve."

But nathelesse, this thought he well inough
That "certainly I am about naught,
If that I speake of love, or make it to tough,
For doubtlesse, if she have in her thought,
Him that I gesse, he may not been ybrought
So sone away, but I shall find a meane,
That she nat yet wete shall what I meane."

This Diomede, as he that could his good,
Whan this was done, gan fallen forth in speech
Of this and that, and aske why she stood
In soch disease, and gan her eke beseech
That if that he encreasen might or ech
With any thing her ease, that she should
Commaunde it him, and said he done it would.

For truely he swore her as a knight,
That ther n'as thing, with which he might her plese
That he nolde done his pain, and al his might
To done it, for to done her herte an ease:
And prayed her she would her sorrow appease,
And sayd, "Ywis we Greekes can have joy
To honouren you, as well as folke of Troy."

He said eke thus, "I wot you thinketh strange,
No wonder is, for it is to you new,
Th'acquaintance of these Trojans to change
For folke of Grece, that ye never knew:
But would never God, but if as true,
A Greeke ye should emong us all find,
As any Trojan is, and eke as kind.

"And bicause I swore you right now,
To ben your frende, and helpir to my might,
And for that more acquaintaunce eke of you
Have I had, than an other straunger wight:
So fro this forth, I pray you day and night,
Commaundeth me, how sore that me smart,
To done all that may like unto your herte.

"And that ye me wold, as your brother treat,
And taketh not my frendship in dispite,
And though your sorowes been for thinges gret,
Not I nat why, but out of more respite,
Mine herte hath for to amend it great delite,
And if I may your harmes nat redresse,
I am right sory for your heavinesse.

"For though ye Trojans with us Greekes wroth
Have many a day been, alway yet parde,
O god of love, in sothe we serven bothe:
And for the love of God my lady free,
Whom so ye hate, as beth not wroth with me,
For truely there can no wight you serve,
That half so loth your wrathe would deserve.

"And n'ere it that we been so nere the tent
Of Calcas, which that seen us bothe may,
I would of this you tell all mine entent,
But this ensealed till an other day:
Yeve me your honde, I am and shall be aie,
God helpe me so, while that my life may dure,
Your owne, aboven every creature.

"Thus said I never er now to woman borne,
For God mine herte as wisely glad so,
I loved never woman here beforne,
As paramours, ne never shall no mo:
And for the love of God be not my fo,
All can I not to you, my lady dere,
Complain a right, for I am yet to lere.

"And wondreth nought, mine owne lady bright,
Though that I speake of love to you thus blive,
For I have heard or this of many a wight,
Hath loved thing he never saw his live:
Eke I am not of power for to strive
Ayenst the god of love, but him obay
I woll alway, and mercy I you pray.

"There beeth so worthy knightes in this place,
And ye so faire, that everiche of hem all
Woll pain him to stonden in your grace,
But might to me so faire a grace fall
That ye me for your servaunt would call,
So lowly, ne so truely you serve,
N'ill none of hem, as I shall till I sterve."

Creseide unto that purpose lite answerde,
As she that was with sorow oppressed so,
That in effect she naught his tales herde,
But here and there, now here a word or two:
Her thought her sorowfull herte brest a two,
For whan she gan her father ferre espie,
Well nigh doune of her hors she gan to sie.

But nathelesse she thonketh Diomede,
Of all his travaile and his good chere,
And that him list his frendship to her bede,
And she accepteth it in good manere,
And woll do fain that is him lefe and dere,
And trusten him she would, and well she might,
As saied she, and from her hors she alight.

Her father hath her in his armes nome,
And twenty times he kist his doughter swete,
And saied: "O dere doughter mine, welcome,"
She said eke, she was fain with him to mete:
And stode forth muet, milde, and mansuete,
But here I leave her with her father dwell,
And forth I woll of Troilus you tell.

To Troy is come this wofull Troilus,
In sorowe aboven all sorowes smert,
With felon loke, and face dispitous,
Tho sodainly doune from his hors he stert,
And through his paleis with swolne herte,
To chamber he went, of nothing toke he hede
Ne none to him dare speke o worde for drede.

And there his sorowes that he spared had,
He yave an issue large, and death he cride,
And in his throwes, frenetike and mad
He curseth Juno, Apollo, and eke Cupide,
He curseth Bachus, Ceres, and Cipride,
His birth, himselfe, his fate, and eke nature,
And save his ladie, every creature.

To bed he goth, and waileth there and turneth,
In furie, as doth he Ixion in Hell,
And in this wise he nigh till day sojourneth,
But tho began his herte alite unswell,
Through teares, which that gonnen up to wel,
And pitiously he cried upon Creseide,
And to him self right thus he spake and seide.

"Where is mine owne lady lefe and dere?
Where is her white brest, where is it, where?
Where been her armes, and her eyen clere
That yesterday this time with me were?

Now may I wepe alone many a teare,
And graspe about I may, but in this place
Save a pilow, I find naught to embrace.

" How shal I doen ? whan shal she come againe ?
I n'ot alas, why let I her to go ?
As would God I had as tho be slain :
O herte mine Creseide, O swete fo,
O lady mine, that I love and no mo,
To whom for ever more mine herte I vowe,
See how I die, ye n'ill me not rescowe.

" Who seeth you now, my right lodesterre ?
Who sitteth right now in your presence ?
Who can comforten now your hertes werre ?
Now I am gon, whom yeve ye audience ?
Who speaketh for me right now in my absence ?
Alas, no wight, and that is all my care,
For well wote I, as evill as I ye fare.

" How should I thus ten daies full endure,
Whan I the firste night have all this tene ?
How shall she eke sorowfull creature,
For tendernesse, how shall she this sustene,
Soche wo for me ? o pitous, pale, and grene,
Shall been your freshe womanly face,
For langour, er ye tourne unto this place."

And whan he fell in any slombringes,
Anon begin he shoulde for to grone,
And dreamen of the dreadfullest thinges
That might been : as mete he were alone
In place horrible, making aie his mone,
Or meten that he was emonges all
His enemies, and in hir hondes fall.

And therewithall his bodie should start,
And with the start all sodainly awake,
And soche a tremour fele about his herte,
That of the feare his bodie should quake :
And therwithall he should a noise make,
And seme as though he should fall depe,
From high alofe, and than he would wepe,

And rewen on himselfe so pitously,
That wonder was to here his fantasie.
An other time he should mightely
Comfort himselfe, and sain it was folie,
So causelesse, soche drede for to drie,
And eft begin his aspre sorowes new,
That every man might on his paines rew.

Who could tell all, or fully discrive
His wo, his plaint, his langour, and his pine ?
Nat all the men that han or been on live,
Thou reader mayst thy self full well devine,
That soche a wo my wit can not define,
On idell for to write it should I swinke,
Whan that my wit is werie it to thinke.

On Heaven yet the sterres weren seen
Although full pale ywoxen was the Mone,
And whiten gan the orisont shene,
All eastward, as it was wont to done,
And Phebus with his rosie carte sone,
Gan after that to dresse him up to fare,
Whan Troilus hath sent after Pandare.

This Pandare, that of all the day beforne
Ne might him comen this Troilus to se,
Although he on his hedde it had sworne,
For with the king Priam alday was he,
So that it lay nat in his liberte,
No where to gon, but on the morow he went
To Troilus, whan that he for him sent.

For in his herte he could well devine,
That Troilus al night for sorow woke,
And that he would tell him of his pine,
This knew he well inough without boke :
For which to chamber streight the way he toke,
And Troilus tho soberly he grette,
And on the bedde full sone he gan him sette.

" My Pandarus," (quod Troilus) " the sorow
Which that I drie, I may not long endure,
I trowe I shall not liven till to morow,
For which I would alwaies on aventure
To thee devisen of my sepoulture
The forme, and of my movable thou dispoen
Right as thee semeth best is for to doen.

" But of the fire and flambe funerall,
In which my body brennen shall to glede,
And of the feast and plaies palestrall,
At my vigile, I pray thee take good hede
That that be well : and offer Mars my stede,
My sword, mine helme : and leve brother dere,
My shelde to Pallas yeve, that shineth clere.

" The poudre in which min herte ybrend shal turn
That pray I thee thou take, and it conserve
In a vessell that men clepeth an urne
Of gold, and to my lady that I serve,
For love of whom thus pitously I sterve,
So yeve it her, and doe me this pleasaunce,
To praien her to kepe it for a remembraunce.

" For well I fele by my maladie,
And by my dreames, now and yore ago,
All certainly, that I mote nedes die :
The oule eke, which that hight Ascaphilo,
Hath after me shright, all these nightes two,
And god Mercurie, now of me wofull wretch
The soule guide, and whan thee list it fetch."

Pandare answerde and saied, " Troilus,
My dere frende, as I have told thee yore,
That it is follie for to sorowen thus,
And causelesse, for which I can no more :
But who so woll not trowen rede ne lore,
I can not seen in him no remedie,
But let him worchen with his fantasie.

" But, Troilus, I pray thee tell me now,
If that thou trowe er this that any wight,
Hath loved paramours as well as thou,
Ye, God wot, and fro many a worthy knight
Hath his ladie gon a fourtenight,
And he nat yet made halvendele the fare,
What nede is the to maken all this care ?

" Sens day by day thou maist thy selven see
That from his love, or eles from his wife
A man mote twinnen of necessitie,
Ye though he love her as his owne life :
Yet nill he with himself thus maken strife,
For well thou wost, my leve brother dere,
That alway frendes may not been yfere.

" How done this folke, that seen hir loves wedded
By frendes might, as it betideth full oft,
And seen hem in hir spouses bedde ybedded ?
God wote they take it wisely faire and soft :

For why, good hope halt up hir herte aloft,
And for they can a time of sorow endure,
As time hem hurteth, a time doth hem cure.

"So shouldest thou endure, and letten slide
The time, and fonde to been glad and light,
Ten dayes n'is not so long to abide,
And sens she to comen thee hath behight,
She n'ill her hest breaken for no wight,
For drede thee not, that she n'ill finde way
To come ayen, my life that durst I lay.

"Thy swevenes eke, and all such fantasie
Drive out, and let hem faren to mischaunce,
For they procede of thy melancolie,
That doth thee fele in slepe all this penaunce:
A straw for all swevenes signifiaunce,
God helpe me so, I count hem not a bean,
There wot no man aright what dremes mean.

"For priestes of the temple tellen this,
That dreames been the revelacions
Of Goddes, and als well they tel ywis,
That they been infernalles illusions
And leches saine, that of complections
Proceden they of fast, or glotonie,
Who wot in sothe thus what they signifie?

"Eke other saine, that through impressions,
As if a wight hath fast a thing in mind,
That thereof cometh soche avisions:
And other sain, as they in bokes find,
That after times of the yere by kind,
Men dreme, and that theffect goth by the Mone,
But leve no dreme, for it is nat to done.

Wel worth of dreames aie these old wives,
And truly eke, augurie of these foules,
For feare of which, men wenen lese hir lives,
As ravens qualm, or schriching of these oules:
To trowen on it, bothe false and foule is,
Alas, alas, that so noble-a creature
As is a man, should drede such ordure.

"For which with al mine herte I thee beseche,
Unto thy self, that all this thou foryeve,
And rise now up, withouten more speche,
And let us cast how forth may best be driven
The time, and eke how freshly we may liven,
Whan she cometh, the which shall be right sone,
God helpe me so, the best is thus to done.

"Rise, let us speake of lustie life in Troy
That we have lad, and forth the time drive,
And eke of time coming us rejoy,
That bringen shall our blisse now to blive,
And langour of these twise daies five
We shall therewith so foryet or oppresse,
That well unneth it done shall us duresse.

"This toune is full of lordes al about,
And truce lasten all this meane while,
Go we plaien us in some lustie rout,
To Sarpedon, not hennes but a mile,
And thus thou shalt the time well beguile,
And drive it forth unto that blisfull morow,
That thou her see, that cause is of thy sorow.

"Now rise, my dere brother Troilus,
For certes it non honour is to thee
To wepe, and in thy bedde to rouken thus,
For truely of o thing trust to me,
If thou thus ligge, a day, two or three,
The folke woll wene, that thou for cowardise,
Thee fainest sick, and that thou darst not rise."

This Troilus answerde: "O brother dere,
This folke know that have ysuffred pain,
That though he wepe, and make sorowful chere
That feeleth harme and smart in every vain,
No wonder is: and though I ever plain
Or alway wepe, I am nothing to blame,
Sens that I have lost the cause of all my game.

"But sens of fine force I mote arise,
I shall arise, as sone as ever I may,
And God, to whom mine herte I sacrifice,
So send us hastely the tenthe day:
For was there never foule so faine of May
As I shall ben, whan that she cometh in Troie,
That cause is of my tourment and my joie.

"But whider is thy rede," (quod Troilus)
"That we may play us best in all this toun?"
"By God my counsaile is," (quod Pandarus)
"To ride and play us with king Sarpedoun."
So long of this they speaken up and down,
Till Troilus gan at the last assent
To rise, and forth to Sarpedon they went.

This Sarpedon, as he that honourable
Was ever his live, and full of hie prowesse,
With all that might yserved been on table,
That deintie was, all coste it great richesse,
He fedde hem day by day, that such noblesse
As saiden both the most and eke the least,
Was never er that day wiste at any feast.

Nor in this world there is none instrument,
Delicious, through winde, or touche on corde,
As ferre as any wight hath ever ywent,
That tonge tell, or herte may recorde,
But at that feast, it was well heard recorde:
Ne of ladies eke so faire a companie,
On daunce er tho, was never yseen with eye.

But what availeth this to Troilus,
That for his sorrow, nothing of it rought,
But ever in one, as herte pitous,
Full busily Creseide his lady sought:
On her was ever al that his herte thought,
Now this, now that, so fast imagining,
That glad ywis can him no feasting.

These ladies eke, that at this feast been,
Sens that he saw his lady was away,
It was his sorow upon hem for to seen,
Or for to heare on instrumentes play:
For she that of his herte hath the kay,
Was absent, lo, this was his fantasie
That no wight shulde maken melodie.

Nor there nas houre in al the day or night,
Whan he was ther as no man might him here,
That he ne sayd, "O lovesome lady bright,
How have ye faren sins that ye were there?
Welcome ywis mine owne lady dere."
But welaway, all this n'as but a mase,
Fortune his hove entended bet to glase.

The letters eke, that she of olde time
Had him ysent, he would alone rede
An hundred sith, atwixt noone and prime,
Refiguring her shape, and her womanhede,

Within his herte, and every worde and dede
That passed was, and thus he drove to an end,
The fourth day, and saied he wol wend.

And said, "Leve brother Pandarus,
Intendest thou that we shall here bleve,
Til Sarpedon woll forth conveyen us,
Yet were it fairer that we toke our leve:
For Goddes love, let us now sone at eve
Our leave take, and homeward let us turne,
For trewely I nill nat thus sojourne."

Pandare answerde, "Be we comen hither
To fetchen fire, and rennen home againe?
God helpe me so, I can nat tellen whither
We might gone, if I shall sothly saine:
There any wight is of us more faine
Than Sarpedon, and if we hence hie
Thus sodainly, I hold it vilanie.

"Whan that we saiden we would bleve
With him a weke, and now thus sodainly
The fourth day to take of him our leve,
He would wondren on it trewly:
Let us holden forth our purpose fermely,
And sens that ye behighten him to abide,
Hold forward now, and after let us ride."

This Pandarus, with all pine and wo
Made him to dwell, and at the wekes end,
Of Sarpedon they toke hir leave tho,
And on hir way they speden hem to wend:
(Quod Troilus) "Now Lorde me grace send,
That I may find at mine home comming,
Creseide comen," and therwith gan he sing.

"Ye haselwode," thought this Pandare,
And to himselfe ful softly he seide,
"God wotte refroiden may this hotte fare,
Er Calcas sende Troilus Creseide:"
But nathelesse he japed thus and seide,
And swore ywis, his herte him wel behight,
She wolde come as sone as ever she might.

Whan they unto the paleis were yeomen,
Of Troilus, they doun of horse alight,
And to the chambre hir way have they nomen,
And unto time that it gan to night,
They speken of Creseide the lady bright,
And after this, whan hem bothe lest,
They spede hem fro the supper unto rest.

On morow as sone as day began to clere,
This Troilus gan of his slepe to abreide,
And to Pandarus, his own brother dere,
"For love of God," full pitously he seide:
"As go we seene the paleis of Creseide,
For sens we yet may have no more feest,
So let us seine her paleis at the leest."

And therewithall his meine for to blende,
A cause he fonde in toune for to go,
And to Creseides house they gan wende,
But Lorde, this sely Troilus was wo,
Him thought his sorowful herte brast atwo,
For when he saw her doores sparred all,
Well nigh for sorow adoun he gan to fall.

Therwith whan he was ware, and gan behold
How shet was every window of the place,
As frost him thought his herte gan to cold,
For which with changed deedly pale face,
Withouten worde, he forth by gan to pace,
And as God would, he gan so faste ride,
That no wight of his countenance aspide.

Than said he thus: "O paleis desolate,
O house of houses, whilom best yhight,
O paleis empty and disconsolate,
O thou lanterne, of which queint is the light,
O paleis whilom day, that now art night,
Wel oughtest thou to fall, and I to die,
Sens she is went, that wont was us to gie.

"O paleis whilom crowne of houses all,
Enlumined with Sunne of alle blisse,
O ring, of which the rubie is out fall,
O cause of wo, that cause hast ben of blisse:
Yet sens I may no bet, fain would I kisse
Thy colde doores, durst I for this rout,
And farewel shrine of which the saint is out."

Therwith he cast on Pandarus his eie,
With changed face, and pitous to behold,
And whan he might his time aright aspie,
Aie as he rode, to Pandarus he told
His new sorow, and eke his joyes old,
So pitously, and with so deed an hew,
That every wight might on his sorow rew.

Fro thence-forth he rideth up and doune,
And every thing came him to remembraunce,
As he rode forth by the places of the toune,
In which he whilom had all his pleasaunce:
"Lo, yonder saw I mine owne lady daunce,
And in that temple with her eien clere,
Me caught first my right lady dere.

"And yonder have I herde full lustely
My dere herte laugh, and yonder play
Saw I her ones eke ful blisfully,
And yonder ones to me gan she say
'Now good sweete love me well I pray,'
And yonde so goodly gan she me behold,
That to the death mine herte is to her hold.

"And at the corner in the yonder house,
Herde I mine alderlevest lady dere,
So womanly, with voice melodiouse,
Singen so wel, so goodly and so clere,
That in my soule yet me thinketh I here
The blisful sowne, and in that yonder place
My lady first me toke unto her grace."

Than thought he thus, "O blisful lord Cupide,
Whan I the processe have in memory,
How thou me hast weried on every side,
Men might a booke make of it like a story:
What nede is thee to seeke on me victory,
Sens I am thine, and holy at thy will,
What joy hast thou thine owne folke to spill?

"Wel hast thou, lord, ywroke on me thine ire,
Thou mighty god, and dredful for to greve,
Now mercy, lord, thou wost wel I desire
Thy grace most, of all lustes leve,
And live and die I wol in thy beleve,
For which I ne aske in guerdon but a boone,
That thou Creseide ayen me sende soone.

"Distraine her herte as faste to returne,
As thou doest mine to longen her to see,
Than wote I wel that she n'il nat sojourne:
Now blisful lord, so cruel thou ne be

Unto the blood of Troy, I praie thee,
As Juno was unto the blode Thebane,
For which the folke of Thebes caught hir bane."

And after this he to the yates went,
There as Creseide out rode, a full good paas,
And up and doun there made he many a went,
And to him selfe ful oft he said, "Alas,
Fro hence rode my blisse and my solas,
As would blisful God now for his joie,
I might her sene ayen come to Troie.

"And to the yonder hil I gan her guide,
Alas, and there I toke of her my leve,
And yonde I saw her to her father ride,
For sorow of which mine herte shal to cleve:
And hither home I come whan it was eve,
And here I dwell, out cast from all joie,
And shal, til I may sene her eft in Troie."

And of him selfe imagined he oft,
To ben defaited, pale, and woxen lesse
Than he was wont, and that men saiden soft,
"What may it be? who can the sothe gesse,
Why Troilus hath al this hevinesse?"
And al this n'as but his melancholie,
That he had of him selfe such fantasie.

Another time imagined he would,
That every wight that went by the wey,
Had of him routh, and that they saine should,
"I am right sory, Troilus wol dey:"
And thus he drove a day yet forth or twey,
As ye have herde, such life gan he lede,
As he that stode betwixen hope and drede.

For which him liked in his songes shewe
Thencheson of his wo, as he best might,
And made a songe, of wordes but a fewe,
Somwhat his wofull herte for to light:
And whan he was from every mannes sight,
With softe voice, he of his lady dere,
That absent was, gan sing as ye may here.

"O sterre, of which I lost have all the light,
With herte sore, wel ought I to bewaile,
That ever derke in turment, night by night
Toward my deth, with winde I stere and saile:
For which the tenth night, if that I faile,
The guiding of thy bemes bright an houre,
My ship and me Caribdes wol devoure."

This song whan he thus songen had sone,
He fel ayen into his sighes old,
And every night, as was he wont to done,
He stode the bright Moone to behold:
And al his sorow he to the Moone told,
And said, "Ywis whan thou art horned new,
I shal be glad, if al the world be trew.

"I saw thine hornes old eke by that morow,
Whan hence rode my right lady dere,
That cause is of my turment and my sorow,
For whiche, O bright Lucina the clere,
For love of God ren fast about thy sphere,
For whan thine hornes newe ginnen spring,
Than shall she come that may my blisse bring."

The day is more, and lenger every night
Than they ben wont to be, him thought tho,
And that the Sunne went his course unright,
By lenger way than it was wont to go,
And said, "Ywis, I drede me evermo
The Sunnes sonne Pheton be on live,
And that his fathers cart amisse he drive."

Upon the walles fast eke would he walke,
And on the Greekes host he would see,
And to himselfe right thus he would talke:
"Lo, yonder is mine owne lady free,
Or else yonder, there the tents bee,
And thence commeth this aire that is so soote,
That in my soule I fele it doth me boote.

"And hardily, this wind that more and more
Thus stoundmeale encreaseth in my face,
Is of my ladies deepe sighes sore,
I preve it thus, for in none other space
Of all this toune, save only in this place,
Feele I no wind, that souneth so like paine,
It saith, 'Alas, why twined be we twaine.'"

This longe time he driveth forth right thus,
Till fully passed was the ninthe night,
And aye beside him was this Pandarus,
That busily did all his full might
Him to comfort, and make his herte light,
Yeving him hope alway the tenth morow,
That she shal comen, and stinten all his sorow.

Upon that other side eke was Creseide,
With women few among the Grekes strong,
For which full oft a day, "Alas," she seide,
"That I was borne, well may mine herte long
After my death, for now live I too long
Alas, and I ne may it not amend,
For now is worse than ever yet I wend.

"My father n'ill for nothing doe me grace
To gone ayen, for aught I can him queme,
And if so be that I my terme pace,
My Troilus shall in his herte deme
That I am false, and so it may well seme,
Thus shall I have unthonke on every side,
That I was borne so welaway the tide.

"And if that I me put in jeopardie,
To steale away by night, and it befall
That I be caught, I shall be hold aspie,
Or else lo, this drede I most of all,
If in the honds of some wretch I fall,
I n'am but lost, all be mine herte trew:
Now mightie God, thou on my sorow rew."

Full pale ywoxen was her bright face,
Her limmes leane, as she that all the day
Stode whan she durst, and loked on the place
There she was borne, and dwelt had aye,
And all the night weeping alas, she lay,
And thus dispeired out of all cure
She lad her life, this wofull creature.

Full oft a day she sighed eke for distresse,
And in her selfe she went aye purtraying
Of Troilus the great worthinesse,
And all his goodly wordes recording,
Sens first that day her love began to spring,
And thus she set her wofull herte afire,
Through remembrance of that she gan desire.

In all this world there n'is so cruell herte,
That her had heard complainen in her sorow,
That n'old have wepten for her paines smart,
So tenderly she wept, both eve and morow,

Her needed no teares, for to borow,
And this was yet the worst of all her paine,
Ther was no wight, to whom she durste plain.

Full rewfully she looked upon Troy,
Beheld the toures high, and eke the hallis,
"Alas," (quod she) "the pleasaunce and the joy,
The which that now all turned into gall is,
Have I had ofte within yonder wallis.
O Troilus, what doest thou now?" she seide,
"Lord, whether thou yet thinke upon Creseide.

"Alas, that I ne had ytrowed on your lore,
And went with you, as ye me redde ere this,
Than had I now not sighed halfe so sore:
Who might have said, that I had done amis
To steale away with such one as he is?
But all too late commeth the lectuarie,
Whan men the corse unto the grave carie.

"Too late is now to speke of that materc,
Prudence, alas, one of thine eyen three
Me lacked alway, ere that I came here:
For on time passed well remembred mee,
And present time eke could I well see,
But future time, ere I was in the snare,
Could I not seene, that causeth now my care.

"But nathelesse, betide what betide,
I shall to morow at night, by east or west,
Out of this hoast steale, on some side,
And gone with Troilus, where as him lest,
This purpose woll I hold, and this is the best,
No force of wicked tongues jonglerie,
For ever on love have wretches had envie.

"For who so woll of every word take hede,
Or rule hem by every wightes wit,
Ne shall he never thriven out of drede,
For that that some men blamen ever yet,
Lo, other manner folke commenden it,
And as for me, for all such variaunce,
Felicitie clepe I my suffisaunce.

"For which, withouten any wordes mo,
To Troy I woll, as for conclusioun."
But God it wote, ere fully moneths two,
She was full ferre fro that ententioun,
For bothe Troilus and Troie toun
Shall knotlesse throughout her herte slide,
For she woll take a purpose for to abide.

This Diomede, of whom I you tell gan,
Goth now within himselfe aye arguing,
With all the sleight and all that ever he can
How he may best with shortest tarying,
Into his nette Creseides herte bring,
To this entent he couthe never fine,
To fishen her, he laid out hooke and line.

But nathelesse, well in his herte he thought,
That she nas nat without a love in Troy,
For never sithen he her thence brought,
Ne couth he seene her laugh, or maken joy,
He n'is how best her herte for t'acoie,
But for t'assay, he said nought it ne greveth,
For he that naught assaieth, naught atcheveth.

Yet saied he to himselfe upon a night,
"Now am I nat a foole, that wote well how
Her wo is, for love of another wight,
And hereupon to gone assay her now,
I may well wete, it n'ill nat ben my prow,
For wise folke in bookes it expresse,
Men shall nat wowe a wight in hevinesse.

"But who so might winnen such a floure
Fro him, for whom she mourneth night and day,
He might saine he were a conquerour:
And right anone, as he that bold was aye,
Thought in his herte, hap how hap may,
All should I dye, I woll her herte seech,
I shall no more lesen but my speech."

This Diomede, as bookes us declare,
Was in his nedes prest and courageous,
With sterne voice, and mighty limmes square,
Hardy, testife, strong, and chevalrous
Of deedes like his father Tideus,
And some men saine he was of tongo large,
And heire he was of Calcidony and Arge.

Creseide meane was of her stature,
Thereto of shape, of face, and eke of chere,
There might ben no fairer creature,
And ofte time this was her manere,
To gone ytressed with her haires clere
Downe by her colere, at her backe behind,
Which with a threde of gold she would bind.

And save her browes joyneden yfere,
There nas no lacke, in aught I can espien,
But for to speaken of her eyen clere,
Lo, truely they written that her seien,
That Paradis stood formed in her eien,
And with her riche beauty evermore
Strove love in her, aie which of hem was more.

She sobre was, eke simple, and wise withall,
The best ynorished eke that might bee,
And goodly of her speech in generall,
Charitable, estately, lusty, and free,
Ne nevermore, ne lacked her pitee,
Tender hearted, sliding of corage,
But truely I can nat tell her age.

And Troilus well woxen was in hight,
And complete formed by proportioun,
So well that Kind it naught amenden might,
Young, fresh, strong, and hardy as lioun,
Trew as steele, in ech conditioun,
One of the best enteched creature,
That is or shall, while that the world may dure.

And certainely, in story as it is fond,
That Troilus was never unto no wight
As in his time, in no degree second,
In daring do that longeth to a knight,
All might a giaunt passen him of might,
His herte aye with the first and with the best,
Stood peregall to dare done what him lest.

But for to tellen forth of Diomede,
It fell, that after on the tenthe day,
Sens that Creseide out of the city yede,
This Diomede, as fresh as braunch in May,
Came to the tente there as Calcas lay,
And fained him with Calcas have to done,
But what he ment, I shall you tellen sone.

Creseide at shorte wordes for to tell,
Welcommed him, and downe him by her sette,
And he was ethe ynough to maken dwell,
And after this, withouten longe lette,

The spices and the wine men forth hem fette,
And forth they speke of this and that yfere,
As friendes done, of which some shall ye here.

He gan first fallen of the warre in speech
Betwixen hem and the folke of Troy toun,
And of th'assiege he gan eke her beseech,
To tellen him what was her opinioun:
Fro that demaund he so discendeth doun,
To asken her, if that her straunge thought
The Greekes gise, and werkes that they wrought?

And why her father tarieth so long
To wedden her unto some worthy wight?
Creseide that was in her paines strong,
For love of Troilus her owne knight,
So ferforth as she cunning had or might,
Answerde him tho, but as of his entent,
It seemed nat she wiste what he ment.

But nathelesse, this ilke Diomede
Gan on himselfe assure, and thus he seide:
"If I aright have taken on you hede,
Methinketh thus, O lady mine Creseide,
That sens I first hond on your bridle leide,
Whan I out came of Troy by the morrow,
Ne might I never seene you but in sorrow.

"I can nat saine what may the cause be,
But if for love of some Trojan it were,
The which right sore would a thinken me,
That ye for any wight that dwelleth there,
Shoulden spill a quarter of a tere,
Or pitously your selven so begile,
For dredelesse it is nat worth the while.

"The folke of Troy, as who saith all and some,
In prison ben, as ye your selven see,
Fro thence shall nat one on live come,
For all the gold atwixen sunne and see,
Trusteth well, and understondeth mee,
There shall nat one to mercy gone on live,
All were he lord of worldes twise five.

"Such wrech on hem for fetching of Heleine
There shall be take, ere that we hence wend,
That Maunes, which that goddes ben of peine,
Shall ben agast that Grekes wol hem shend,
And men shall drede unto the worldes end
From henceforth to ravishen any queene,
So cruell shall our wreche on hem be seene.

"And but if Calcas lede us with ambages,
That is to saine, with double wordes slie,
Such as men clepen a word with two visages,
Ye shall well knowen that I nat ne lie,
And all this thing right sene it with your eie,
And that anon, ye nill nat trow how soone,
Now taketh hede, for it is for to doone.

"What wene ye your wise father would
Have yeven Antenor for you anone,
If he ne wiste that the city should
Destroied ben? why nay so mote I gone,
He knew full well there shall nat scapen one
That Troian is, and for the greate fere
He durste nat that ye dwelt lenger there.

"What woll ye more, O lovesome lady dere?
Let Troy and Troians fro your herte passe,
Drive out that bitter hope, and make good chere,
And clepe ayen the beautie of your face,
That ye with salte teares so deface,
For Troy is brought in such a jeopardie,
That it to save is now no remedie.

"And thinketh well, ye shall in Grekes find
A more perfite love, ere it be night,
Than any Troian is, and more kind,
And bet to serven you woll done his might,
And if ye vouchsafe my lady bright,
I woll ben he, to serven you my selve,
Ye lever than be lord of Greces twelve."

And with that word he gan to waxen reed,
And in his speech a little while he quoke,
And cast aside a little with his heed,
And stint a while, and afterward he woke,
And soberly on her he threw his loke,
And said, "I am, albeit to you no joy,
As gentill a man as any wight in Troy.

"For if my father Tideus" (he seide)
"Ylived had, I had been ere this,
Of Calcidonie and Arge a king, Creseide,
And so hope I that I shall be ywis:
But he was slaine alas, the more harme is,
Unhappily at Thebes all to rathe,
Polimite, and many a man to scathe.

"But herte mine, sithe that I am your man,
And ben the first, of whom I seche grace,
To serve you as heartely as I can,
And ever shall, while I to live have space,
So that, ere I depart out of this place,
Ye woll me graunte, that I may to morow
At better leiser tell you of my sorow."

What shuld I tell his wordes that he seide?
He spake ynough for o day at the mest
It preveth well he spake so, that Creseide
Graunted on the morrow at his request
For to speake with him at the least,
So that he n'olde speake of such matere,
And thus she to him said, as ye mowe here.

As she that had her herte on Troilus
So fast, that there may it none arace,
And straungely she spake, and saied thus:
"O Diomede, I love that ilke place
There was I borne, and Joves of thy grace
Deliver it soone of all that doth it care,
God for thy might so leve it well to fare.

"That Grekes wold hir wrath on Troie wreke
If that they might, I know it well ywis,
But it shall naught befallen as ye speke,
And God toforne, and farther over this,
I wote my father wise and ready is,
And that he me hath bought, as ye me told,
So dere am I the more unto him hold.

"That Greekes ben of high conditioun,
I wote eke well, but certaine men shall find
As worthie folke within Troie toun,
As conning, as perfite, and as kinde,
As ben betwixte Orcades and Inde,
And that ye coulde well your lady serve
I trow eke well, her thonke for to deserve.

"But as to speake of love, ywis" (she seide)
"I had a lord, to whom I wedded was,
His whose mine herte was all till he deide,
And other love, as helpe me now Pallas,

There in mine herte n'is, ne never was,
And that ye ben of noble and high kinrede,
I have well herde it tellen out of drede.

" And that doth me to have so great a wonder,
That ye woll scornen any woman so,
Eke God wote, love and I ben fer asonder,
I am disposed bet, so mote I go,
Unto my death plaine and make wo ;
What I shall after done, I can not say,
But truely as yet me list nat play.

" Mine herte is now in tribulatioun,
And ye in armes busie day by day,
Hereafter whan ye wonen have the toun,
Paraventure than, so it happen may,
That whan I see that I never ere sey,
Than woll I werke that I never ere wrought,
This word to you ynough suffisen ought.

" To morow eke wol I speken with you faine,
So that ye touchen naught of this matere,
And whan you list, ye may come here againe,
And ere ye gone, thus much I say you here,
As helpe me Pallas, with her haires clere,
If that I should of any Greeke have routh,
It shulde be your selven by my trouth.

" I say nat therefore that I woll you love,
Ne say nat nay, but in conclusioun,
I meane well by God that sit above :"
And therewithall she cast her eien doun,
And gan to sigh, and said, " Troilus and Troy toun
Yet bidde I God, in quiet and in rest
I may you seene, or do mine herte brest."

But in effect, and shortly for to say,
This Diomede all freshly new againe
Gan preasen on, and fast her mercy pray,
And after this, the soothe for to saine,
Her glove he toke, of which he was full faine,
And finally, whan it was woxen eve,
And all was well, he rose and tooke his leve.

The bright Venus folowed and aie taught
The way there brode Phebus doune alight,
And Cithera her chare horse over raught,
To whirle out of the Lion, if she might,
And Signifer his candles sheweth bright,
Whan that Creseide unto her bed went,
Within her fathers faire bright tent.

Retourning in her soule aye up and doun
The wordes of this suddaine Diomede,
His great estate, and perill of the toun,
And that she was alone, and had nede
Of friendes help, and thus began to brede
The cause why, the soothe for to tell,
She tooke fully purpose for to dwell.

The morow came, and ghostly for to speke,
This Diomede is come unto Creseide,
And shortly, least that ye my tale breke,
So well he for himselfe spake and seide,
That all her sighes sore doune he leide,
And finally, the soothe for to saine,
He refte her the great of all her paine.

And after this, the story telleth us,
That she him yave the faire bay stede,
The which she ones wan of Troilus,
And eke a brooch (and that was little nede)
That Troilus' was, she yave this Diomede,
And eke the bet from sorow him to releve,
She made him weare a pencell of her sleve.

I find eke in stories elsewhere,
Whan through the body hurt was Diomede
Of Troilus, tho wept she many a tere,
Whan that she saw his wide woundes blede,
And that she tooke to kepen him good hede,
And for to healen him of his smart,
Men saine, I n'ot, that she yave him her herte.

But truely the storie telleth us,
There made never woman more wo
Than she, whan that she falsed Troilus,
She said " Alas, for now is clene ago
My name in trouth of love for evermo,
For I have falsed one the gentillest
That ever was, and one the worthiest.

" Alas, of me unto the worldes end
Shall neither ben ywritten or ysong
No good worde, for these bokes woll me shend :
Yrolled shall I been on many a tong,
Throughout the world my bell shall be rong,
And women most woll hate me of all,
Alas, that such a caas me should fall.

" They woll saine, in as much as in me is,
I have hem done dishonour welaway,
All be I not the first that did amis,
What helpeth that, to done my blame away,
But sens I see there is no better way,
And that too late is now for me to rue,
To Diomede I woll algate be true.

" But Troilus, sens I no better may,
And sens that thus departen ye and I,
Yet pray I God so yeve you right good day,
As for the gentillest knight truely
That ever I saw, to serven faithfully,
And best can aye his ladies honour kepe,"
And with that word she brast anon to wepe.

" And certes, you ne haten shall I never,
And friendes love, that shall ye have of me,
And my good word, all should I liven ever,
And truely I would right sorrie be,
For to seene you in adversite,
And guiltlesse I wot well I you leave,
And all shall passe, and thus take I my leave."

But truely how long it was bitwene,
That she forsoke him for this Diomede,
There is none authour telleth it I wene,
Take every man now to his bookes hede,
He shall no terme finden, out of drede,
For though that he began to wowe her sone,
Ere he her wan, yet was there more to done.

Ne me ne list this selie woman chide
Ferther than the storie woll devise,
Her name alas, is published so wide,
That for her gilt it ought ynough suffise,
And if I might excuse her in any wise,
For she so sorrie was for her untrouth,
Ywis I would excuse her yet for routh.

This Troilus, as I before have told,
Thus driveth forth, as wel as he hath might,
But ofte was his herte hote and cold,
And namely that ilke ninthe night,

Which on the morrow she had him behight
To come ayen, God wote full little rest
Had he that night, nothing to slepe him lest.

Tho laurer crowned Phebus, with his heat
Gan in his course aie upward as he went,
To warmen of the east sea the waves wete,
And Circes doughter song, with fresh entent,
Whan Troilus his Pandare after sent,
And on the walles of the towne they pleide,
To looke, if they can seene ought of Creseide.

Till it was noone, they stooden for to see
Who that there came, and every maner wight
That came fro ferre, they saiden it was shee,
Till that they coulden knowen him aright:
Now was his herte dull, now was it light,
And thus bejaped stooden for to stare
About naught, this Troilus and Pandare.

To Pandarus this Troilus tho seide
"For aught I wot, before noone sikerly,
Into this toune ne cometh not here Creseide,
She hath ynough to doen hardely
To winnen from her father, so trow I,
Her olde father woll yet make her dine
Ere that she go, God yeve his herte pine."

Pandarus answerd, "It may well been certain
And forthy let us dine, I thee beseech,
And after noone than maist thou come again:"
And home they go, without more speech,
And comen ayen, but long may they seech,
Ere that they finde that they after gape,
Fortune hem bothe thinketh for to jape.

(Quod Troilus) "I see well now that she
Is taried with her old father so,
That ere she come, it woll nigh even be.
Come forth, I woll unto the yate go,
These porters ben unkonning everiuo,
And I woll done hem holden up the yate,
As naught ne were, although she come late."

The day goth fast, and after that came eve,
And yet came nat to Troilus Creseide,
He looketh forth by hedge, by tree, by greve,
And ferre his head over the wall he leide,
And at the last he tourned him and seide,
"By God I wote her meaning now Pandare,
Almost ywis all newe was my care.

"Now doubtelesse this lady can her good,
I wote she commeth riding prively,
I commend her wisedome by mine hood,
She woll nat maken people nicely
Gaure on her whan she commeth, but softely
By night into the toune she thinketh ride,
And, dere brother, thinke nat long to abide,

"We have naught else for to done ywis,
And Pandarus, now wilt thou trowen me,
Have here my trouth, I see her, yon she is,
Heave up thine eyen man, mayst thou nat see?"
Pandare answerde, "Nay, so mote I the,
Al wrong by God, what saist thou man, wher art,
That I see yonde afarre, n'is but a cart."

"Alas, thou sayst right sooth," (quod Troilus)
"But hardely it is not all for nought,
That in mine herte I now rejoyce thus,
It is ayenst some good, I have a thought,
Not I nat how, but sens that I was wrought,
Ne felt I such a comfort dare I say,
She cometh to night, my life that durst I lay."

Pandarus answerde, "It may be well ynough,"
And held with him of all that ever he saied,
But in his herte he thought, and soft he lough,
And to himselfe full soberly he saied,
"From hasell wood, there jolly Robin plaied,
Shall come all that thou abidest here,
Ye, farwell all the snow of ferne yere."

The wardein of the yates gan to call
The folk, which that without the yates were,
And bad hem driven in hir beastes all,
Or all the night they must bleven there,
And ferre within the night, with many a tere,
This Troilus gan homeward for to ride,
For well he seeth it helpeth nat to abide.

But nathelesse, he gladded him in this,
He thought he misacompted had his day,
And saied, "I understand have all amis,
For thilke night I laste Creseide sey,
She sayd, 'I shall ben here, if that I may,
Ere that the Moone, O dere herte swete,
The Lion passe out of this Ariete.'

"For which she may yet hold all her behest,"
And on the morrow unto the yate he went,
And up and doune, by west and eke by east
Upon the walles made he many a went,
But all for naught, his hope alway him blent,
For which at night, in sorow and sighe sore,
He went him home, withouten any more.

This hope all cleane out of his herte fled,
He ne hath whereon now lenger for to hong,
But for the paine him thought his herte bled,
So were his throwes sharp, and wonder strong,
For whan he saw that she abode so long,
He n'ist what he judgen of it might,
Sens she hath broken that she him behight.

The thirde, fourth, fifte, and sixt day
After tho dayes tenne, of which I told,
Betwixen hope and drede his herte lay,
Yet somewhat trusting on her hestes old,
But whan he saw she n'olde her terme hold,
He can now seene none other remedie,
But for to shape him soone for to die.

Therwith the wicked spirit, God us blesse,
Which that men clepen woode jealousie,
Gan in him crepe, in all this hevinesse,
For which because he would soone die,
He ne eat ne dronke for his melancholie,
And eke from every company he fled,
This was the life that all this time he led.

He so defaite was, that no manner man,
Unneth he might knowen there he went,
So was he leane, and thereto pale and wan,
And feeble, that he walketh by potent,
And with his ire he thus himselfe shent:
But who so asked him whereof him smart,
He sayd, his harme was all about his herte.

Priam full oft, and eke his mother dere,
His bretherne and his sustren gan him frain
Why he so sorrowfull was in all his chere,
And what thing was the cause of all his pain;

But all for naught, he n'olde his cause plain,
But sayd, he felt a grievous maladie
About his herte, and faine he would die.

So on a day he laid him down to slepe,
And so befell, that in slepe him thought,
That in a forrest fast he walked to wepe
For love of her that him these paines wrought,
And up and doune as he that forrest sought,
He met he saw a bore, with tuskes great,
That slept ayenst the bright Sunnes heat.

And by this bore, fast in her armes fold
Lay kissing aye his lady bright Creseide,
For sorrow of which, whan he it gan behold,
And for dispite, out of his slepe he breide,
And loude he cried on Pandarus, and seide,
"O Pandarus, now know I crop and root,
I n'am but dead, there n'is none other boot.

"My lady bright Creseide hath me betraied,
In whom I trusted most of any wight,
She elsewhere hath now her herte apaied,
The blisfull goddes, through hir greate might,
Have in my dreame yshewed it full right,
Thus in my dreame Creseide have I behold,"
And all this thing to Pandarus he told.

"O my Creseide, alas, what subtelte!
What newe lust! what beauty! what science!
What wrath of juste cause have ye to me!
What guilt of me! what fell experience
Hath me rafte, alas, thine advertence!
O trust, O faith, O depe assurauncc,
Who hath me raft Creseide, all my pleasaunce!

"Alas, why let I you from hence go!
For which well nigh out of my wit I breide,
Who shall now trow on any othes mo!
God wote I wend, O lady bright Creseide,
That every word was gospell that ye seide,
But who may bet beguile, if him list,
Than he on whom men wenen best to trist!

"What shall I done, my Pandarus, alas!
I fele now so sharpe a newe paine,
Sens that there is no remedy in this caas,
That bet were it I with mine hondes twaine
My selven slow than alway thus to plaine,
For through the death my wo shuld have an end,
There every day with life my self I shend."

Pandare answerde and said, "Alas the while
That I was borne, have I nat saied er this,
That dreames many a manner man beguile!
And why? For folke expounden hem amis:
How darest thou saine that false thy lady is,
For any dreame, right for thine own drede,
Let be this thought, thou canst no dreames rede.

"Peraventure there thou dremest of this bore,
It may so be that it may signifie
Her father, which that old is and eke hore,
Ayen the sunne lieth on point to die,
And she for sorow ginneth wepe and crie,
And kisseth him, there he lieth on the ground,
Thus shuldest thou thy dreme aright expound."

"How might I then doen" (quod Troilus)
"To know of this, yea were never so lite?"
"Now sayst thou wisely," (quod this Pandarus)
"My rede is this, sens thou canst well endite,
That hastily a letter thou her write,
Through which thou shalt well bringen about
To know a sooth of that thou art in dout.

"And see now why: for this dare I well sain,
That if so is, that she untrue be,
I cannot trowen that she woll write again,
And if she write, thou shalt full sone ysee,
As whether she hath any liberte
To come ayen, or els in some clause
If she be let, she woll assigne a cause.

"Thou hast not written to her sens she went,
Nor she to thee, and this I durst lay,
There may such cause ben in her entent,
That hardly thou wolt thy selven say,
That her abode the best is for you tway:
Now write her than, and thou shalt fele sone
A sooth of all, there is no more to done."

Accorded ben to this conclusioun,
And that anon, these ilke lords two,
And hastely sate Troilus adoun,
And rolleth in his herte too and fro,
How he may best descriven her his wo,
And to Creseide his owne lady dere,
He wrote right thus, and said as ye may here.

THE COPIE OF THE LETTER.

"RIGHT fresh flour, whose I have ben and shall,
Withouten part of elsewhere servise,
With herte, body, life, lust, thought, and all,
I wofull wight in every humble wise
That tong can tell, or herte may devise,
As oft as matter occupieth place,
Me recommaund unto your noble grace.

"Liketh it you to weten, sweete herte,
As ye well know, how long time agon
That ye me left in aspre paines smart,
Whan that ye went, of which yet bote non
Have I non had, but ever worse bigon,
Fro day to day am I, and so mote dwell,
While it you list, of wele and wo my well.

"For which to you, with dredefull herte trew,
I write (as he that sorow driveth to write)
My wo, that every houre encreaseth new,
Complaining as I dare, or can endite,
And that defaced is, that may ye wite,
The teares, which that from mine eyen rain,
That wulden speke, if that they durst, and plain

"You first beseech I, that your eyen clere
To looke on this defouled ye nat hold:
And over all this, that ye, my lady dere,
Woll vouchsafe this letter to behold,
And by the cause eke of my cares cold,
That slaeth my wit, if aught amis me start,
Foryeve it me, mine owne sweet herte.

"If any servaunt durst or ought of right
Upon his lady pitously complaine,
Than wene I that I ought be that wight,
Considred this, that ye these moneths twaine
Have taried, there ye saiden sooth to saine,
But tenne daies ye nolde in hoste sojourne,
But in two moneths yet ye not retourne.

"But for as much as me mote nedes like
All that you list, I dare nat plaine more,

But humbly, with sorowfull sighes sike,
You right I mine unrestie sorowes sore,
Fro day to day, desiring evermore
To knowen fully, if your will it were,
How ye have fared and don while ye be there.

" Whose welfare and heale eke God encrease
In honour such, that upward in degree
It grow alway, so that it never cease,
Right as your herte aye can, my lady free,
Devise, I pray to God so mote it be,
And graunt it, that you soone upon me rew,
As wisely as in all I am to you trew.

" And if you liketh knowen of the fare
Of me, whose wo ther may no wight discrive,
I can no more, but chest of every care,
At writing of this letter I was on live,
All redy out my wofull ghost to drive,
Which I delay, and hold him yet in hond,
Upon the sight of matter of your sond.

" Mine eyen two, in vaine with which I see,
Of sorowfull teres salt arn woxen wellis,
My song in plaint of mine adversite,
My good in harm, mine ease eke woxen Hell is,
My joy in wo, I can sey now nought ellis,
But tourned is, for which my life I warie,
Every joy or ease in his contrarie.

" Which with you coming home ayen to Troy
Ye may redresse, and more a thousand sithe,
Than ever I had encreasen in me joy,
For was there never herte yet so blithe
To save his life, as I shall ben as swithe
As I you see, and though no manner routh
Can meven you, yet thinketh on your trouth.

" And if so be my gilt hath death deserved,
Or if you list no more upon me see,
In guerdon yet of that I have you served,
Beseech I you, mine owne lady free,
That hereupon ye woulden write me
For love of God, my right lodesterre,
That death may make an end of al my werre.

" If other cause aught doth you for to dwell,
That with your letter ye may me recomfort,
For though to me your absence is an Hell,
With patience I woll my wo comfort,
And with your letter of hope I woll disport:
Now writeth, swete, and let me thus nat plaine,
With hope or deathe delivereth me fro paine.

" Ywis, mine owne dere herte trew,
I wote that whan ye next upon me see,
So lost have I mine heale and eke mine hew,
Creseide shall not conne knowen me,
Ywis, mine hertes day, my lady free,
So thursteth aye mine herte to behold
Your beautie, that unneth my life I hold.

" I say no more, all have I for to sey
To you well more than I tell may,
But whether that ye do me live or dey,
Yet pray I God so yeve you right good day,
And fareth well, goodly faire fresh May,
As ye that life or death me may commaund,
And to your trouth aye I me recommaund.

" With heale such, that but ye yeven me
The same heale, I shall none heale have,
In you lieth, whan you list that it so be,
The day in which me clothen shall my grave,
And in you my life, in you might for to save
Me fro disease of all my paines smart,
And fare now well, mine owne sweet herte.
" Le vostre T."

This letter forth was sent unto Creseide,
Of which her answere in effect was this,
Full pitously she wrote ayen, and seide,
That all so soone as she might ywis,
She would come, and amend all that was amis,
And finally, she wrote and saied than,
She would come, ye, but she nist whan.

But in her letter made she such feasts,
That wonder was, and swore she loved him best,
Of which he found but bottomlesse bihests.
But Troilus thou mayst now east and west
Pipe in an ivie leafe, if that thee lest:
Thus goth the world, God shilde us fro mischaunce,
And every wight that meaneth trouth avaunce.

Encreasen gan the wo fro day to night
Of Troilus, for tarying of Creseide,
And lessen gan his hope and eke his might,
For which all doun he in his bedde him leide,
He ne eat, dronke, ne slept, ne worde seide,
Imagining aye that she was unkind,
For which wel nigh he wext out of his mind.

This dreme, of which I told have eke beforne,
May never come out of his remembraunce,
He thought aye well he had his lady lorne,
And that Joves, of his purveyaunce,
Him shewed had in sleepe the signifiaunce
Of her untrouth, and his disaventure,
And that the bore was shewed him in figure.

For which he for Sibilie his suster sent,
That called was Cassandre eke all about,
And all his dreame he told her ere he stent,
And her besought assoilen him the dout
Of the strong bore, with tuskes stout,
And finally, within a little stound,
Cassandre him gan thus his dreme expound.

She gan first smile, and said, " O brother dere,
If thou a sooth of this desirest to know,
Thou must a fewe of old stories here,
To purpose how that fortune overthrow
Hath lordes old, through which within a throw
Thou shalt this bore know, and of what kind
He comen is, as men in bookes find.

" Diane, which that wroth was and in ire,
For Greekes n'olde done her sacrifice,
Ne incens upon her altar set on fire,
She for that Greekes gon her so dispise,
Wrake her in a wonder cruell wise,
For with a bore as great as oxe in stall,
She made up frete her corne and vines all.

" To slee the bore was all the country raised,
Emong whiche there came this bore to se
A maid, one of this world the best ypraised,
And Meleager, lord of that countre:
He loved so this freshe maiden free,
That with his manhood, ere he would stent,
This bore he slough, and her the hed he sent.

"Of whiche, as olde bookes tellen us,
There rose a conteke and a great envie,
And of this lord discended Tideus
By line, or els old bookes lie:
But how this Meleager gan to die
Through his mother, woll I you not tell,
For all too long it were for to dwell."

She told eke how Tideus, ere she stent,
Unto the strong citie of Thebes
(To claimen kingdome of the citie) went
For his fellawe dan Polimites,
Of which the brother dan Ethiocles
Full wrongfully of Thebes held the strength.
This told she by processe all by length.

She told eke how Hemonides astart,
Whan Tideus slough fiftie knightes stout,
She told eke all the prophesies by herte,
And how that seven kinges with hir rout
Besiegeden the citie all about,
And of the holy serpent, and the well,
And of the furies all she gan him tell.

Associat profugus Tideus primo Polynicem,
Tidea ligatum docet insidiasque secundo,
Tertius Hæmoniden canit, et vatem latitantem,
Quartus habet reges ineuntes prælia septem,
Lemniadum furiæ quinto narrantur et anguis,
Archemori bustum sexto ludique sequuntur.
Dat Thebis vatem Graiorum septimus umbris,
Octavo cecidit Tideus, spes, vita Pelasgum,
Hippomedon nono moritur cum Parthenopeo,
Fulmine percussus decimo Capeneus superatur,
Undecimo perimunt sese per vulnera fratres,
Argivum flentem, narrat duodenus et ignem.

Of Archinories burying, and the plaies,
And how Amphiorax fill through the ground,
How Tideus was slaine, lord of Argeis,
And how Hippomedon in a little stound
Was dreint, and dead Parthenope of wound,
And also how Campaneus the proud
With thunder dint was slaine, that cried loud.

She gan eke tell him how that either brother
Ethiocles and Polinices also
At a scarmishe eche of hem slouth other,
And of Argives weeping and her mo,
And how the toun was brent she told eke tho,
And tho discended doun from gestes old
To Diomede, and thus she spake and told.

"This ilke bore betokeneth Diomede,
Tideus son, that doun descended is
Fro Meleager, that made the bore to blede,
And thy lady, where so she be ywis,
This Diomede her herte hath, and she is his:
Weep if thou wolt or leave, for out of dout
This Diomede is in, and thou art out."

"Thou sayst not sooth," (quod he) "thou sor-
With all thy false ghost of prophecie, [ceresse,
Thou wenest been a great devineresse,
Now seest thou nat this foole of fantasie,
Painen her on ladies for to lie,
Away," (quod he) "there Joves yeve the sorow,
That shalt be fals peraventure yet to morow.

"As well thou mightest lien on good Alceste,
That was of creatures (but men lie)
That ever weren, kindest, and the best,
For whan her husbond was in jeopardie
To die himselfe, but if she would die,
She chese for him to die, and gon to Hell,
And starfe anon, as us the bookes tell."

Cassandre goeth, and he with cruell herte
Foryate his wo, for anger of his speech,
And fro his bedde all suddainly he start,
As though a hole him had ymade a leech,
And day by day he gan require and seech
A sooth of this, with all his full cure,
And thus he driveth forth his aventure.

Fortune which that permutation
Of all things hath, as it is her committed,
Through purveyaunce and disposition
Of high Jove, as reignes shall ben flitted
Fro folk to folk, or whan they shal ben smitted,
Gan pull away the feathers bright of Troy
Fro day to day till they ben bare of joy.

Emong all this, the fine of the jeopardie
Of Hector gan approchen wonder blive,
The fate would his soule should unbodie,
And shapen had a meane it out to drive,
Ayenst which fate him helpeth not to strive,
But on a day to fighten gan he wend,
At which alas, he caught his lives end.

For which me thinketh every manner wight
That haunteth armes, ought to bewaile
The death of him that was so noble a knight:
For as he drough a king by th'aventaile
Unware of this, Achilles through the maile
And through the bodie gan him for to rive,
And thus the worthy knight was reft of live.

For whom, as old bookes tellen us,
Was made such wo, that tong it may nat tell,
And namely, the sorow of Troilus,
That next him was of worthinesse the well,
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwell,
That what for sorow, love, and for unrest,
Full oft a day he bad his herte brest.

But nathelesse, tho he gon him dispaire,
And drede aye that his lady was untrue,
Yet aye on her his herte gan repaire,
And as these lovers done, he sought aye new
To get ayen Creseide bright of hew,
And in his herte he went her excusing,
That Calcas caused all her tarying.

And oft time he was in purpose great,
Himselven like a pilgrime to disguise,
To seene her, but he may not counterfeat,
To ben unknowen of folke that weren wise,
Ne find excuse aright that may suffise,
If he among the Grekes knowen were,
For which he wept full oft many a tere.

To her he wrote yet oft time all new,
Full pitously, he left it nat for slouth,
Beseeching her, sens that he was true,
That she woll come ayen, and hold her trouth,
For which Creseide upon a day for routh,
I take it so, touching all this matere,
Wrote him ayen, and said as ye may here.

"Cupides sonne, ensample of goodlihede,
O swerde of knighthood, sours of gentilnesse,
How might a wight in turment and in drede,

And healelesse, you send as get gladnesse,
I hertelesse, I sicke, I in distresse,
Sens ye with me, nor I with you may deale,
You neither send I herte may nor heale.

" Your letters full the paper all iplainted,
Conceived hath mine hertes pite,
I have eke seene with teares all depainted,
Your letter, and how that ye requiren me
To come ayen, which yet ne may not be,
But why, least that this letter founden were,
No mention ne make I now for fere.

" Grevous to me (God wote) is your unrest,
Your hast, and that the Goddes ordinaunce
It seemeth nat ye take it for the best,
Nor other thing n'is in your remembraunce,
As thinketh me, but only your pleasaunce,
But beth not wroth, and that I you beseech,
For that I tary is all for wicked speech.

" For I have heard well more than I wend
Touching us two, how thinges have ystond,
Which I shall with dissimuling amend,
And beth nat wroth, I have eke understond,
How ye ne do but holden me in hond,
But now no force, I can nat in you gesse,
But all trouth and all gentilnesse.

" Come I woll, but yet in such disjoint
I stond as now, that what yere or what day
That this shall be, that can I nat appoint,
But in effect I pray you as I may
Of your good word, and of your friendship aye,
For truly while that my life may dure,
As for a friend ye may in me assure.

" Yet pray I you, no evill ye ne take
That it is short which that I to you write,
I dare nat there I am well letters make,
Ne never yet ne could I well endite,
Eke great effect, men write in place lite,
Th'entent is all, and nat the letters space,
And fareth well, God have you in his grace.
" La vostre C."

This Troilus thought this letter all straunge
Whan he it saw, and sorowfully he sight,
Him thought it like a kalends of eschaunge,
But finally he full ne trowen might,
That she ne would him holden that she hight,
For with ful evell will list him to leve,
That loveth well in such case, though him greve.

But nathelesse, men saine that at the last,
For any thing, men shall the soothe see,
And such a case betide, and that as fast,
That Troilus well understood that she
N'as nat so kind as that her ought to be,
And finally, he wote now out of dout,
That all is lost that he hath ben about.

Stood on a day in his melancholy
This Troilus, and in suspectioun
Of her, for whom he wend to dye,
And so befell, that throughout Troie toun,
As was the guise, yborne was up and doun
A manner cote armoure, as saith the story,
Beforne Deiphebe, insigne of his victory.

The whiche cote, as telleth Lollius,
Deiphebe it hath rent fro Diomede
The same day, and whan this Troilus
It saw, he gan to taken of it hede,
Avising of the length and of the brede,
And all the werke, but as he gan behold,
Full sodainly his herte gan to cold.

As he that on the coler found within
A brooch, that he Creseide yave at morow
That she from Troy must nedes twin,
In remembraunce of him, and of his sorow,
And she him laid ayen her faith to borow,
To keepe it aye: but now full well he wist,
His lady nas no longer on to trist.

He goth him home, and gan full soone send
For Pandarus, and all this newe chaunce,
And of this broch, he told him word and end,
Complaining of her hertes variaunce,
His longe love, his trouth, and his pennaunce,
And after Death, without words more,
Full fast he cried, his rest him to restore.

Than spake he thus, " O lady mine Creseide,
Where is your faith, and where is your behest?
Where is your love, where is your trouth" he seide,
" Of Diomede have ye now all the fest?
Alas, I would have trowed at the least,
That sens ye n'olde in trouthe to me stond,
That ye thus n'olde have holden me in hond.

" Who shall now trowen on any othes mo?
Alas, I never would have wend ere this,
That ye, Creseide, could have chaunged so,
Ne but I had agilt, and done amis;
So cruell wend I nat your herte ywis,
To slee me thus, alas, your name of trouth
Is now fordone, and that is all my routh.

" Was there none other broche you list lete,
To feast with your new love," (quod he)
" But thilke broche that I with teres wete
You yave, as for a remembraunce of me?
None other cause alas, ne had ye,
But for dispite, and eke for that ye ment
All utterly to shewen your entent.

" Through which I see, that clene out of your mind
Ye have me cast, and I ne can nor may
For all this world within mine herte find,
To unloven you a quarter of a day:
In cursed time I borne was, welaway,
That you that done me all this wo endure,
Yet love I best of any creature.

" Now God" (quod he) " me sende yet the grace,
That I may meten with this Diomede,
And truely, if I had might and space,
Yet shall I make I hope his sides blede:
Now God" (quod he) " that oughtest taken hede
To forthren trouth, and wronges to punice,
Why n'ilt thou don a vengeance of this vice.

" O Pandarus, that in dremes for to trist
Me blamed hast, and wont art oft upbreide,
Now mayst thou seen thy self, if that thee list,
How trew is now thy nece, bright Creseide:
In sundry formes (God it wote)" he seide,
" The gods shewen both joy and tene
In slepe, and by my dreme it is now sene.

" And certainely, withouten more speech,
From henceforth, as ferforth as I may,

Mine owne death in armes woll I seech,
I retche nat how soone be the day,
But truely Creseide, sweet May,
Whom I have with all my might iserved,
That ye thus done, I have it nat deserved."

This Pandarus, that all these thinges herd,
And wiste well he said a sooth of this,
He nat a word ayen to him answerd,
For sorie of his friends sorrow he is,
And shame for his nece hath done amis,
And stant astonied of these causes twey,
As still as stone, o word ne could he sey.

But at the last, thus he spake and seide,
"My brother dere, I may do thee no more,
What should I saine, I hate ywis Creseide,
And God it wote, I woll hate her evermore:
And that thou me besoughtest done of yore,
Having unto mine honour ne my rest
Right no regard, I did all that thee lest.

"If I did aught that might liken thee,
It is me lefe, and of this treason now,
God wote that it a sorrow is to me,
And dredelesse, for hertes ease of you,
Right faine I would amend it, wist I how:
And fro this world, Almighty God, I pray
Deliver her soone, I can no more say."

Great was the sorow and plaint of Troilus,
But forth her course fortune aye gan hold,
Creseide loveth the sonne of Tideus,
And Troilus mote wepe in cares cold,
Such is this world, who so it can behold,
In eche estate is little hertes rest,
God leve us to take it for the best.

In many cruell battaile out of drede,
Of Troilus, this ilke noble knight,
(As men may in these old bookes rede)
Was seen his knighthood and his great might,
And dredelesse his ire day and night
Full cruelly the Grekes aye abought,
And alway most this Diomede, he sought.

And oft time (I finde) that they mette
With bloody strokes, and with wordes great,
Assaying how hir speares were whette,
And God it wote, with many a cruell heat
Gan Troilus upon his helme to beat,
But nathelesse, fortune it naught ne would
Of others hond that either dien should.

And if I had ytaken for to write
The armes of this ilke worthy man,
Than would I of his battailes endite,
And for that I to writen first began
Of his love, I have said as I can
His worthy deedes, who so list hem here,
Rede Dares, he can tell hem all yfere.

Beseeching every lady bright of hew,
And every gentill woman, what she be,
Albeit that Creseide was untrew,
That for that gilt ye be nat wroth with me
Ye may her gilt in other bookes see,
And gladder I would write, if you lest,
Penelopes trouth, and good Alceste.

Ne say I nat this all onely for these men,
But most for women that betraied be
Through false folk, God yeve hem sorow, amen,
That with hir great wit and subtilte
Betraien you: and this meveth me
To speake, and in effect you all I pray
Beth ware of men, and hearkeneth what I say.

Go, little booke, go, my little tragedie,
There God my maker yet ere that I die,
So send me might to make some comedie:
But little booke, make thou none envie,
But subject ben unto all poesie,
And kisse the steps whereas thou seest pace
Of Vergil, Ovid, Homer, Lucan, and Stace.

And for there is so great diversite
In English, and in writing of our tong,
So pray I to God, that none miswrite thee,
Ne the misse-metre, for defaut of tong:
And redde where so thou be, or eles song,
That thou be understond, God I beseech,
But yet to purpose of my rather speech.

The wrath (as I began you for to sey)
Of Troilus, the Greekes boughten dere,
For thousandes his hondes maden dey,
As he that was withouten any pere,
Save in his time Hector, as I can here,
But welaway, save onely Goddes will,
Dispitously him slough the fierce Achill.

And whan that he was slain in this manere,
His light ghoste full blisfully is went
Up to the hollownesse of the seventh sphere,
In his place leting everiche element,
And there he saw with full avisement
The erratike sterres, herkening armonie,
With sownes full of Heavens melodie.

And doun from thence, fast he gan avise
This little spot of earth, that with the see
Enbraced is, and fully gan despise
This wretched world, and held all vanite
To respect of the plaine felicite
That is in Heaven above: and at the last,
There he was slaine, his looking doun he cast.

And in himselfe he lough, right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for his death so fast,
And dampned all our werkes that followeth so
The blinde lust, whiche that may nat last,
And shoulden all our herte on Heaven cast,
And forth he went, shortely for to tell,
There as Mercurie sorted him to dwell.

Such fine hath lo, this Troilus for love,
Such fine hath all his great worthinesse,
Such fine hath his estate royall above,
Such fine his lust, such fine hath his noblesse,
Such fine hath false worldes brotelnesse,
And thus began his loving of Creseide,
As I have told, and in this wise he deide.

O young fresh folkes, he or she,
In which that love up groweth with your age,
Repaireth home from worldly vanite,
And of your hertes up casteth the visage
To thilke God, that after his image
You made, and thinketh all n'is but a faire,
This world that passeth sone, as floures faire.

And loveth him the which that right for love
Upon a crosse our soules for to bey,

First starfe and rose, and sit in Heven above,
For he n'ill falsen no wight dare I sey,
That wol his herte all holy on him ley,
And sens he best to love is and most meeke,
What needeth fained loves for to seeke.

Lo, here of painems cursed olde rites,
Lo, here what all hir goddes may availe,
Lo, here this wretched worldes appetites,
Lo, here the fine and guerdon for travaile,
Of Jove, Apollo, of Mars, and such raskaile,
Lo, here the forme of olde clerkes speech
In poetrie, if ye hir bookes seech.

O morall Gower, this booke I direct
To thee, and to the philosophicall Strode,
To vouchsafe there need is, to correct,
Of your benignities and zeales good,
And to the soothfast Christ that starfe on rood,
With all mine herte of mercy ever I pray,
And to the Lord aright, thus I speake and say,

Thou one, two, and three, eterne on live,
That raignest aie in thre, two, and one,
Uncircumscript, and all maist circumscrive,
Us from visible and invisible fone
Defend, and to thy mercy everichone,
So make us, Jesus, to thy mercy digne,
For love of maide, and mother thine benigne.

THUS ENDETH THE FIFTH AND LAST BOOKE OF TROILUS.

THE COURT OF LOVE.

This booke is an imitation of the Romaunt of the Rose, shewing that all are subject to love, what impediments soever to the contrary: containing also those twentie statutes which are to be observed in the Court of Love.

v. 1—70

WITH temerous herte, and trembling hand of drede,
Of cunning naked, bare of eloquence,
Unto the floure of porte in womanhede
I write, as he that none intelligence
Of metres hath, ne floures of sentence:
Saufe that me list my writing to convey,
In that I can to please her high nobley.

The blosomes fresh of Tullius gardein sote
Present they not, my matter for to born:
Poemes of Virgil taken here no rote,
Ne craft of Galfride may not here sojourn:
Why n'am I cunning? O well may I mourn
For lacke of science, that I cannot write
Unto the princes of my life aright.

No tearmes digne unto her excellence,
So is she sprong of noble stirpe and high;
A world of honour and of reverence
There is in her, this will I testifie:
Caliope, thou suster wise and slie,
And thou Minerva, guide me with thy grace,
That language rude my matter not deface.

Thy suger droppes sweet of Helicon
Distill in me, thou gentle Muse, I pray,
And thee Melpomene, I call anone,
Of ignoraunce the mist to chase away:
And give me grace so for to write and say,
That she my lady of her worthinesse
Accept in gree this little short treatesse,

That is entituled thus, The Court of Love:
And ye that ben metriciens me excuse,
I you beseech for Venus sake above,
For what I mean in this, ye need not muse:
And if so be my lady it refuse
For lacke of ornate speech, I would be wo,
That I presume to her to writen so.

But my entent, and all my busie cure
Is for to write this treatesse as I can,
Unto my lady, stable, true, and sure,
Faithfull and kind, sith first that she began
Me to accept in service as her man:
To her be all the pleasure of this book,
That whan her like she may it rede and look.

WHAN I was young, at eighteene yeare of age,
Lusty and light, desirous of pleasaunce,
Approching on full sadde and ripe courage,
Love arted me to do my observaunce
To his estate, and done him obeisaunce,
Commaunding me the Court of Love to see,
Alite beside the mount of Citharee.

There Citherea goddesse was and quene,
Honoured highly for her majeste,
And eke her sonne, the mighty god I wene,
Cupide the blind, that for his dignitee
A thousand lovers worship on their knee;
There was I bid in paine of death to pere,
By Mercury the winged messengere.

So than I went by strange and fer countrees,
Enquiring aye what coast had to it drew
The Court of Love; and thiderward as bees,
At last I see the people gan pursue;
And me thought some wight was there that knew
Where that the court was holden ferre or nie,
And after them full fast I gan me hie.

Anone as I them overtooke I said,
"Haile friends, whither purpose ye to wend?"
"Forsooth," (quod one) that answered liche a maid,
"To Loves Court now go we gentle friend."
"Where is that place," (quod I) "my fellow hend?"
"At Citheron, sir," said he, "withoute dout,
The king of love, and all his noble rout

"Dwelleth within a castle rially."
So than apace I journed forth among,
And as he said, so fond I there truly;
For I beheld the toures high and strong,
And high pinacles, large of hight and long,
With plate of gold bespred on every side,
And precious stones, the stone werke for to hide.

No saphire in Inde, no rubie rich of price,
There lacked than, nor emeraud so grene,
Bales Turkes, ne thing to my device,
That may the castle maken for to shene:
All was as bright as sterres in winter bene,
And Phebus shone to make his peace ageine,
For trespas done to high estates tweine,

Venus and Mars, the god and goddesse clere,
Whan he them found in armes cheined fast;
Venus was than full sad of herte and chere,
But Phebus' beams streight as is the mast,
Upon the castle ginneth he to cast,
To please the lady, princes of that place,
In signe he looketh after Loves grace.

For there n'is god in Heaven or Hell ywis,
But he hath ben right soget unto Love;
Jove, Pluto, or whatsoever he is,
Ne creature in yearth, or yet above;
Of these the revers may no wight approve.
But furthermore, the castle to descrie,
Yet saw I never none so large and hie;

For unto Heaven it stretcheth, I suppose,
Within and out depeinted wonderly,
With many a thousand daisies rede as rose,
And white also, this saw I verely:
But who tho daisies might do signifie,
Can I not tell, safe that the quenes floure,
Alceste it was that kept there her sojoure;

Which under Venus lady was and quene,
And Admete king and soveraine of that place,
To whom obeied the ladies good ninetene,
With many a thousand other bright of face:
And yong men fele came forth with lusty pace,
And aged eke, their homage to dispose,
But what they were I coud not well disclose.

Yet nere and nere forth in I gan me dress
Into an hall of noble apparaile,
With arras spred, and cloth of gold I gesse,
And other silke of esier availe:
Under the cloth of their estate, sauns faile,
The king and quene there sat as I beheld;
It passed joy of Helise the field.

There saints have their comming and resort,
To seene the king so rially beseine
In purple clad, and eke the quene in sort,
And on their heads saw I crownes twaine,
With stones fret, so that it was no paine,
Withouten meat and drink, to stand and see
The kinges honour and the rialtee.

And for to treat of states with the king,
That ben of councel cheef, and with the quene;
The king had Danger nere to him standing,
The quene of love, Disdain, and that was sene:
For by the faith I shall to God, I wene,
Was never straunger none in her degree,
Than was the quene in casting of her eye.

And as I stood perceiving her apart,
And eke the beames shining of her eyen,
Me thought they weren shapen lich a dart,
Sharpe and persing, and smal and streight of line;
And all her haire it shone as gold so fine,
Dishivil crispe, downe hanging at her backe
A yard in length: and soothly than I spake.

"O bright regina, who made thee so faire?
Who made thy colour vermelet and white?
Wher wonneth that god, how far above the aire?
Great was his craft, and great was his delite.
Now marvell I nothing that ye do hight
The quene of love, and occupie the place
Of Cithare: now sweet lady thy grace."

In mewet spake I so, that nought astart
By no condition word, that might be hard;
But in my inward thought I gan advert,
And oft I said "My wit is dull and hard:"
For with her beauty thus, God wot, I ferde
As doth the man yravished with sight,
Whan I beheld her cristall eyen so bright;

No respect having what was best to doone,
Till right anone beholding here and there,
I spied a friend of mine, and that full soone,
A gentlewoman, was the chamberere
Unto the quene, that hote as ye shall here,
Philobone, that loved all her life:
Whan she me sey, she led me forth as blife;

And me demanded how and in what wise
I thither come, and what my errand was?
"To seen the court" (quod I) "and all the guise,
And eke to sue for pardon and for grace,
And mercy aske for all my great trespace,
That I none erst come to the Court of Love:
Foryeve me this, ye goddes all above."

"That is well said," (quod Philobone) "indede:
But were ye not assomoned to appere
By Mercurius, for that is all my drede?"
"Yes gentill feire," (quod I) "now am I here;
Ye yet what tho though that be true my dere?"
"Of your free will ye should have come unsent;
For ye did not, I deme ye will be shent:

"For ye that reigne in youth and lustinesse,
Pampired with ease, and jalous in your age,
Your duty is, as ferre as I can gesse,
To Loves Court to dressen your viage,
As soone as nature maketh you so sage,
That ye may know a woman from a swan,
Or whan your foot is growen halfe a span.

"But sith that ye by wilfull negligence
This eighteene year hath kept your self at large,
The greater is your trespas and offence,
And in your neck you mote bere all the charge:
For better were ye ben withouten barge
Amidde the sea in tempest and in raine,
Than biden here, receiving wo and paine

"That ordained is for such as them absent
Fro Loves Court by yeres long and fele.
I ley my life ye shall full soone repent,
For Love will rive your colour, lust, and hele;
Eke ye must bait on many an heavy mele;
No force ywis: I stirred you long agone
To draw to court" (quod) little Philobone.

"Ye shall well see how rough and angry face
The king of love will shew, whan ye him se:
By mine advise kneel down and ask him grace,
Eschewing perill and adversite,
For well I wote, it woll none other be;
Comfort is none, ne counsell to your ease,
Why will ye than the king of love displease?"

"O mercy God," (quod iche) "I me repent,
Caitife and wretch in herte, in will, and thought,
And after this shall be mine hole entent
To serve and please, how dere that love be bought:
Yet sith I have mine own pennance ysought,
With humble sprite shall I it receive,
Though that the king of love my life bereive.

"And though that fervent loves qualite
In me did never worch truly, yet I
With all obeisaunce and humilite,
And benigne herte shall serve him till I die:
And he that lord of might is great and hie,
Right as him list me chastice and correct,
And punish me with trespace thus infect."

These words said, she caught me by the lap,
And led me forth in till a temple round,
Both large and wide: and as my blessed hap
And good aventure was, right soone I found
A tabernacle raised from the ground,
Where Venus sat, and Cupide by her side:
Yet halfe for drede I can my visage hide;

Yet eft againe, I looked and beheld,
Seeing full sundry people in the place,
And mistere folke, and some that might not weld
Their limmes wele, me thought a wonder case:
The temple shone with windows all of glass,
Bright as the day with many a fair image;
And there I see the fresh queen of Cartage,

Dido, that brent her beauty for the love
Of false Æneas; and the waimenting
Of her, Annelida, true as turtle dove
To Arcite fals; and there was in peinting
Of many a prince, and many a doughty king,
Whose martirdom was shewed about the wals,
And how that fele for love had suffred fals.

But sore I was abashed and astonied
Of all tho folke that there were in that tide,
And than I askeden where they had wonned:
"In divers courts" (quod she) "here beside."
In sundry clothing mantill wise full wide
They were arraied, and did their sacrifise
Unto the god and goddesse in their guise.

"Lo, yonder folke" (quod she) "that kneele in blew,
They weare the colour aye and ever shall,
In signe they were and ever will be trew
Withouten chaunge; and soothly yonder all
That ben in black, and mourning cry and call
Unto the gods, for their loves bene,
Som sick, som dede, som all to sharp and kene."

"Yea, than" (quod I) "what done these priests here,
Nonnes and hermites, freres, and all tho,
That sit in white, in russet, and in grene?"
"Forsooth" (quod she) "they wailen of their wo."
"O mercy lord, may they so come and go
Freely to court and have such liberty?"
"Yea, men of each condition and degre;

"And women eke: for, truly, there is none
Exception made, ne never was ne may;
This court is ope and free for everichone,
The king of love he will not say them nay:
He taketh all in poore or rich array,
That meekely sewe unto his excellence
With all their herte and all their reverence."

And walking thus about with Philobone
I see where come a messengere in hie
Streight from the king, which let command anone,
Throughout the court to make an ho and cry:
"All new come folke abide, and wote ye why?
The kings lust is for to seene you sone:
Come nere let see, his will mote need be done."

Than gan I me present tofore the king,
Trembling for fere with visage pale of hew,
And many a lover with me was kneeling,
Abashed sore, till unto the time they knew
The sentence yeve of his entent full trew:
And at the last, the king hath me behold
With sterne visage, and seid, "What doth this old

"Thus ferre ystope in yeres come so late
Unto the court?" "Forsooth, my liege," (quod I)
"An hundred time I have ben at the gate
Afore this time, yet coud I never espie
Of mine acqueintaunce any in mine eie,
And shamefastnesse away me gan to chace;
But now I me submit unto your grace."

"Well, all is pardoned, with condition,
That thou be true from henceforth to thy might,
And serven Love in thine entention;
Sweare this, and than, as ferre as it is right,
Thou shalt have grace here in thy quenes sight."
"Yes, by the faith I owe to your croun, I swere,
Though Death therefore me thirlith with his spere."

And whan the king had seene us everychone,
He let commaund an officer in hie
To take our faith, and shew us, one by one,
The statutes of the court full busily:
Anon the booke was laid before their eie,
To rede and see what thing we must observe
In Loves Court, till that we die and sterve.

And for that I was lettred, there I red
The statutes hole of Loves Court and hall:
The first statute that on the booke was spred,
Was to be true in thought and deedes all
Unto the king of love, the lord riall,
And to the quene, as faithfull and as kind,
As I could think with herte, will, and mind.

The second statute, secretly to kepe
Councell of love, not blowing every where
All that I know, and let it sinke and flete;
It may not sowne in every wights ere;
Exiling slaunder aye for drede and fere,
And to my lady which I love and serve,
Be true and kind her grace for to deserve.

The third statute was clerely writ also,
Withouten chaunge to live and die the same,
None other love to take for wele ne wo,
For blind delite, for ernest, nor for game;
Without repent for laughing or for grame,
To bidden still in full perseveraunce:
All this was hole the kings ordinaunce.

The fourth statute, to purchase ever to here,
And stirren folke to love, and beten fire
On Venus auter, here about and there,
And preach to them of love and hote desire,
And tell how love will quiten well their hire:
This must be kept, and loth me to displease:
If love be wroth, passe: for thereby is ease.

The fifth statute, not to be daungerous,
If that a thought would reve me of my slepe;
Nor of a sight to be over squemous;
Aud so verely this statute was to kepe,
To turne and wallow in my bed and wepe,
Whan that my lady of her cruelty
Would from her herte exilen all pity.

The sixt statute, it was for me to use
Alone to wander, void of company,
And on my ladies beauty for to muse,
And to thinke it no force to live or die
And eft againe to thinke the remedie,
How to her grace I might anone attaine,
And tell my wo unto my soveraine.

The seventh statute, was to be patient,
Whether my lady joyfull were or wroth,
For words glad or heavy, diligent,
Wheder that she me helden lefe or loth:
And hereupon I put was to mine oth,
Her for to serve, and lowly to obey,
In shewing her my chere, ye, twenty sithe aday.

The eighth statute, to my remembraunce,
Was to speaken and pray my lady dere,
With hourely labour and great entendaunce,
Me for to love with all her herte entere,
And me desire, and make me joyfull chere,
Right as she is surmounting every faire,
Of beauty well and gentle debonaire.

The ninth statute, with letters writ of gold,
This was the sentence, how that I, and all,
Should ever dread to be to overbold
Her to displease; and truely, so I shall,
But ben content for thinge that may fall,
And meekely take her chastisement and yerd,
And to offend her ever ben aferd.

The tenth statute, was egally to discerne
Betwene the lady and thine ability,
And thinke thy selfe art never like to yerne,
By right, her mercy nor her equity,
But of her grace and womanly pity;
For though thy selfe be noble in thy strene,
A thousand fold more noble is thy quene,

Thy lives lady and thy soveraine,
That hath thine herte all hole in governaunce;
Thou mayst no wise it taken to disdaine
To put thee humbly at her ordinaunce,
And give her free the reine of her plesaunce,
For liberty is thing that women looke,
And truly els the matter is a crooke.

The eleventh statute, thy signs for to know
With eye and finger, and with smiles soft,
And low to couch, and alway for to show,
For drede of spies, for to winken oft,
And secretly to bring up a sigh aloft;
But still beware of overmuch resort,
For that paraventure spileth all thy sport.

The twelfth statute remember to observe:
For all the paine thou hast for love and wo,
All is too lite her mercy to deserve,
Thou musten think, wherever thou ride or go:
And mortall woundes suffer thou also,
All for her sake, and thinke it well besette
Upon thy love, for it may not be bette.

The thirteenth statute, whilome is to thinke
What thing may best thy lady like and please,
And in thine hertes bottome let it sinke;
Some thing devise, and take for it thine ease,
And send it her, that may her herte appease;
Some herte, or ring, or letter, or device,
Or precious stone, but spare not for no price.

The fourteenth statute eke thou shalt assay,
Formely to keepe the most part of thy life:
Wish that thy lady in thine armes lay,
And nightly dreme, thou hast thy nights hertes wife,
Sweetly in armes, straining her as blife;
And whan thou seest it is but fantasie,
See that thou sing not over merely,

For too much joy hath oft a wofull end:
It longeth eke this statute for to hold,
To deme thy lady ever more thy friend,
And thinke thy selfe in no wise a cokold.
In every thing she doth but as she should:
Construe the best, beleeve no tales new,
For many a lye is told, that seemeth full trew.

But thinke that she, so bounteous and faire,
Coud not be false; imagine this algate:
And think that tonges wicked would her appaire,
Sclandering her name and worshipfull estate,
And lovers true to setten at debate:
And though thou seest a faut right at thine eye,
Excuse it blive, and glose it pretily.

The fifteenth statute, use to swere and stare,
And counterfeit a lesing hardely,
To save thy ladies honour every where,
And put thy selfe for her to fight boldely:
Say she is good, vertuous, and ghostly,
Clere of entent, and herte, yea, thought and will,
And argue not for reason ne for skill,

Againe thy ladies pleasure ne entent;
For love will not be countrepleted indede:
Say as she saith, than shalt thou not be shent,
The crow is white, ye truly so I rede:
And aye what thing that she thee will forbede,
Eschew all that, and give her soveraintee,
Her appetite followe in all degree.

The sixteenth statute keepe it if thou may:
Seven sithe at night thy lady for to please,
And seven at midnight, seven at morrow day,
And drinke a caudle earely for thine ease.
Do this and keep thine head from all disease,
And win the garland here of lovers all,
That ever came in court, or ever shall.

Full few, think I, this statute hold and keep:
But truely, this my reason giveth me fele,
That some lovers should rather fall asleepe,
Than take on hand to please so oft and wele.
There lay none oth to this statute adele,
But keep who might, as gave him his corage;
Now get this garland lusty folke of age:

Now win who may ye lusty folke of youth,
This garland fresh of floures red and white,
Purple and blew, and colours fell uncouth,
And I shall croune him king of all delite.
In all the court there was not to my sight,
A lover true, that he ne was adrede
Whan he expresse hath heard the statute rede.

The seventeenth statute, whan age approcheth on,
And lust is laid, and all the fire is queint,
As freshly than thou shalt begin to fonne
And dote in love, and all her image paint
In thy remembraunce, till thou begin to faint,
As in the first season thine herte began:
And her desire, though thou ne may ne can

Performe thy living actuell and lust,
Register this in thine remembraunce:
Eke whan thou maist not keep thy thing from rust,
Yet speake and talke of pleasaunt daliaunce,
For that shall make thine herte rejoice and daunce;
And whan thou maist no more the game assay,
The statute bid thee pray for them that may.

The eighteenth statute, holy to commend
To please thy lady, is that thou eschew
With sluttishnesse thy selfe for to offend;
Be jollife, fresh, and fete, with thinges new,
Courtly with manner, this is all thy due;
Gentill of port, and loving cleanlinesse,
This is the thing, that liketh thy maistresse.

And not to wander liche a dulled asse,
Ragged and torne, disguised in array,
Ribaud in speech, or out of measure passe,
Thy bound exceeding; thinke on this alway;
For women been of tender hertes aye,
And lightly set their pleasure in a place,
Whan they misthinke, they lightly let it passe.

The nineteenth statute, meat and drinke forgete:
Ech other day, see that thou fast for love,
For in the court they live withouten mete,
Save such as cometh from Venus all above,
They take none hede, in pain of great reprove,
Of meat and drinke, for that is all in vaine,
Onely they live by sight of their soveraine.

The twentieth statute, last of everichone,
Enroll it in thyne hertes privitee;
To wring and waile, to turne, and sigh and grone,
Whan that thy lady absent is from thee,
And eke renew the words all that she
Between you twain hath said, and all the chere
That thee hath made, thy lives lady dere.

And see thine herte in quiet, ne in rest
Sojourne, till time thou seene thy lady eft;
But where she wonne, by south, or east, or west,
With all thy force, now see it be not left;
Be diligent, till time thy life be raft,
In that thou mayest, thy lady for to see:
This statute was of old antiquitee.

An officer of high authority,
Cleped Rigour, made us to swere anone:
He n'as corrupt with partiality,
Favour, prayer, ne gold that clerely shone;
"Ye shall" (quod he) "now sweren here echone,
Yong and old, to kepe, in that they may,
The statutes truly, all after this day."

O God, thought I, hard is to make this othe,
But to my power shall I them observe:
In all this world n'as matter halfe so lothe,
To sweare for all: for though my body sterve,
I have no might them hole to observe.
But herken now the case how it befell,
After my oth was made, the troth to tell.

I tourned leaves, looking on this booke,
Where other statutes were of women shene,
And right forthwith Rigour on me gan looke
Full angerly, and sayed unto the queene
I traitour was, and charged me let been;
"There may no man" (quod he) "the statute know
That long to women, hie degree ne low.

"In secret wise they kepten been full close;
They soune echone to liberty, my friend,
Pleasaunt they be, and to their owne purpose;
There wote no wight of them, but God and fiend,
Ne naught shall wite, unto the worlds end.
The queen hath yeve me charge in pain to die
Never to rede ne seene them with mine eie.

"For men shall not so nere of counsaile bene
With womanhood, ne knowen of her guise,
Ne what they think, ne of their wit thengine;
I me report to Salomon the wise,
And mighty Sampson, which beguiled thrise
With Dalida was, he wote that in a throw,
There may no man statute of women know.

"For it peraventure, may right so befall,
That they be bound by nature to deceive,
And spinne, and weep, and sugre strew on gall,
The herte of man to ravish and to reive,
And whet their tongue as sharpe as swerde or gleve;
It may betide, this is their ordinance,
So must they lowly doen their observaunce.

"And keepe the statute yeven them of kind,
Of such as love hath yeve hem in their life.
Men may not wete why turneth every wind,
Nor waxen wise, nor been inquisitife
To know secret of maid, widow, or wife,
For they their statutes have to them reserved,
And never man to know them hath deserved.

"Now dresse you forth, the god of love you guide,"
(Quod Rigour than) "and seek the temple bright
Of Cithera, goddesse here beside,
Beseech her by influence and might
Of all her vertue, you to teach aright,
How for to serve your ladies, and to please
Ye that been sped, and set your herte in ease.

"And ye that ben unpurveyed, pray her eke
Comfort you soone with grace and destiny,
That ye may set your herte there ye may like,
In such a place, that it to love may be
Honour and worship, and felicity
To you for aye, now goeth by one assent."
"Graunt mercy, sir," (quod we) and forth we went

Devoutly, soft and easie pace, to see
Venus the goddesse image all of gold:
And there we found a thousand on their knee,
Some fresh and faire, some deadly to behold,
In sundry mantils new and some were old;
Some painted were with flames red as fire,
Outward, to show their inward hote desire.

With dolefull chere, ful fell in their complaint,
Cried "Lady Venus, rew upon our sore!
Receive our bils, with teares all bedreint!
We may not weepe, there is no more in store,
But wo and pain us fretteth more and more:
Thou blisseful planet, lovers sterre so shene,
Have routh on us, that sigh and carefull bene!

"And punish, lady, grevously we pray,
The false untrue with counterfeit pleasaunce,
That made their oth, be true to live or dey,
With chere assured, and with countenaunce;
And falsely now they footen loves daunce,
Barraine of routh, untrue of that they saied,
Now that their lust and pleasure is alaied."

Yet eft againe, a thousand million
Rejoycing love, leading their life in blisse,
They sayd "Venus, redresse of all division,
Goddesse eternell, thy name yhired is:
By loves bond is knit all thing ywis,
Beast unto beast, the yearth to water wan,
Bird unto bird, and woman unto man.

"This is the life of joy that we ben in,
Resembling life of heavenly paradise,
Love is exiler aye of vice and sinne,
Love maketh hertes lusty to devise
Honour and grace, have they in every wise,
That been to loves law obedient;
Love maketh folke benigne and diligent,

"Aye stering them to drede vice and shame:
In their degree, it maketh them honourable,
And sweet it is of love to beare the name,
So that his love be faithfull, true and stable:
Love pruneth him, to semen amiable,
Love hath no faute, there it is exercised,
But sole with them that have all love dispised.

"Honour to thee, celestiall and clere,
Goddesse of love, and to thy celsitude!
That yevest us light so fer doun from thy spere,
Piercing our hertes with thy pulcritude;
Comparison none of similitude
May to thy grace be made in no degree,
That hast us set with love in unitie.

"Great cause have we to praise thy name and thee,
For thorough thee we live in joy and blisse.
Blessed be thou, most soveraine to see!
Thy holy court of gladnesse may not misse;
A thousand sithe we may rejoice in this,
That we ben thine with herte and all yfere,
Enflamed with thy grace and heavenly fere."

Musing of tho that spaken in this wise,
I me bethought in my remembraunce
Mine orizon right goodly to devise,
And pleasantly with hertes obeisaunce,
Beseech the goddesse voiden my grevaunce,
For I loved eke, saufe that I wist not where,
Yet downe I set and said as ye shall here.

"Fairest of all that ever were or bee,
Licour and light to pensife creature,
Mine hole affiaunce, and my lady free,
My goddesse bright, my fortune and my ure,
I yeve and yeeld my herte to thee full sure,
Humbly beseeching, lady, of thy grace,
Me to bestow now in some blessed place.

"And here I vow me, faithful, true, and kind,
Without offence of mutabilitie,
Humbly to serve, while I have wit and mind,
Mine hole affiaunce, and my lady free,
In thilke place, there ye me signe to be:
And sith this thing of new is yeve me aye
To love and serve, needly must I obey.

"Be merciable with thy fire of grace,
And fix mine herte there beauty is and routh:
For hote I love, determine in no place,
Saufe onely this, by God and by my trouth
Troubled I was, with slumber, slepe, and slouth
This other night, and in a visioun
I see a woman romen up and doun,

"Of meane stature, and semely to behold,
Lustie and fresh, demure of countenaunce,
Yong and well shape, with hair shone as gold,
With eyen as cristal, ferced with pleasaunce,
And she gan stirre mine herte a lite to daunce:
But suddainly she vanish gan right there,
Thus I may say, I love and wote not where.

"For what she is, ne her dwelling I n'ot,
And yet I fele that love distreineth me;
Might iche her know, her would I faine, God wot,
Serve and obey with all benignitie,
And, if that other be my destinie,
So that no wise I shall her never see,
Than graunt me her that best may liken me.

"With glad rejoyce to live in parfite hele,
Devoid of wrath, repent or variaunce:
And able me to doe that may be wele
Unto my lady, with hertes hie pleasaunce:
And mighty goddes through thy purveiaunce
My wit, my thoght, my lust and love so guide,
That to thine honor I may me provide

"To set mine herte in place there I may like,
And gladly serve with all affection:
Great is the paine which at mine herte doth sticke,
Till I be sped by thine election;
Helpe, lady goddesse! that possession
I might of her have that in all my life
I clepen shall my quene, and hertes wife.

"And in the Court of Love to dwell for aye
My will it is, and done thee sacrifice:
Daily with Diane eke to fight and fraye,
And holden werre, as might will me suffice:
That goddesse chast I keepen in no wise
To serve; a figge for all her chastity,
Her law is for religiousity."

And thus gan finish prayer, laud, and preise,
Which that I yove to Venus on my knee,
And in mine herte to ponder and to peise,
I gave anone her image fresh beautie:
"Heile to that figure sweet, and heile to thee
Cupide," (quod I) and rose and yede my wey,
And in the temple as I yede, I sey

A shrine surmounting all in stones rich,
Of which the force was pleasaunce to mine ey
With diamond or saphire, never liche
I have none seene, ne wrought so wonderly:
So whan I met with Philobone in hie,
I gan demaund, who is this sepulture?
"Forsooth" (quod she) "a tender creature

" Is shrined there, and Pity is her name ;
She saw an egle wreke him on a flie,
And pluck his wing, and eke him in his game,
And tender herte of that hath made her die :
Eke she would weep and mourn right pitously
To seene a lover suffer great distresse ;
In all the court n'as none, as I do gesse,

" That coud a lover halfe so well availe,
Ne of his wo the torment or the rage
Asken, for he was sure withouten faile,
That of his greef she coud the heat assuage.
In steed of Pity, speedeth hote courage
The matters all of court, now she is dead,
I me report in this to womanhead.

' Forweil, and weep, and cry, and speak, and pray,
Women would not have pity on thy plaint,
Ne by that mean, to ease thine herte convay,
But thee receiven for their owne talent:
And say that Pity causeth thee in consent
Of reuth to take thy service and thy paine,
In that thou maist, to please thy soveraine.

" But this is counsaile, keepe it secretly,"
(Quod she) " I n'old for all the world about,
The queene of love it wist, and wite ye why ?
For if by me this matter springen out,
In court no lenger should I out of dout
Dwellen, but shame in all my life endry,
Now keepe it close" (quod she) " this hardely.

" Well all is well, now shall ye seen" she said,
" The fairest lady under Sunne that is :
Come on with me, demean you lich a maid,
With shamefast drede, for ye shall speak ywis
With her that is the mirrour joy and blisse :
But somewhat strange and sad of her demean
She is ; beware your countenaunce be seen,

" Nor over light, ne rechelesse, ne too bold,
Ne malapert, ne renning with your tong,
For she will you obeisen and behold,
And you demand why ye were hence so long
Out of this court, without resort among :
And Rosiall her name is hote aright,
Whose herte as yet is yeven to no wight.

" And ye also been, as I understond,
With love but light avanced, by your word,
Might ye by hap your freedom maken bond,
And fall in grace with her, and wele accord,
Well might ye thank the god of love and lord,
For she that ye saw in your dreame appere,
To love such one, what are ye than the nere ?

" Yet wote ye what, as my remembraunce
Me yeveth now, ye faine where that ye say,
That ye with love had never acquaintaunce,
Save in your dream right late this other day :
Why yes parde, my life that durst I lay,
That ye were caught upon an heath, whan I
Saw you complain, and sigh full pitously.

" Within an herber, and a gardein faire
Where flowers grow and herbes vertuous,
Of which the savour swete was and the aire,
There were your self full hote and amorous :
Ywis ye been too nice and daungerous,
I would ye now repent, and love some new."
" Nay by my trouth," I said " I never knew
" The goodly wight, whose I shall be for aye :
Guide me the lord, that love hath made and me."
But forth we went into a chamber gay,
There was Rosiall, womanly to see,
Whose streames sotell piercing of her eye,
Mine herte gan thrill for beauty in the stound,
" Alas," (quod I) " who hath me yeve this wound ?"

And than I drede to speake, till at the last
I grete the lady reverently and wele,
Whan that my sigh was gone and overpast ;
Than doun on knees ful humbly gan I knele,
Beseeching her my fervent wo to kele,
For there I tooke full purpose in my mind
Unto her grace my painfull herte to bind.

For if I shall all fully her discrive,
Her head was round, by compasse of nature,
Here haire as gold, she passe i all on live,
And lilly forehed had this creature,
With liveliche browes, flaw of colour pure,
Betwene the which was meane disceveraunce
From every brow, to shew a due distaunce.

Her nose directed streight, and even as line,
With forme and shape thereto convenient,
In which the goddes milk white path doth shine,
And eke her eyen ben bright and orient,
As is the smaragde, unto my judgement,
Or yet these sterres Heavenly small and bright,
Her visage is of lovely rede and white.

Her mouth is short, and shit in little space,
Flaming somedeale, not over redde I mean,
With pregnant lips, and thick to kisse percase,
For lippes thinne not fat, but ever lene,
They serve of naught, they be not worth a bean,
For if the basse been full there is delite,
Maximian truly thus doth he write.

But to my purpose, I say white as snow
Been all her teeth, and in order they stond
Of one stature, and eke her breath I trow
Surmounteth all odours that ever I found
In sweetnesse, and her body, face, and hond
Been sharpely slender, so that from the head
Unto the foot, all is but womanhead.

I hold my peace, of other thinges hidde
Here shall my soule and not my tong bewray,
But how she was arraied, if ye me bidde,
That shall I well discover you and say ;
A bend of gold and silke, full fresh and gay,
With her intresse, broudered full wele,
Right smoothly kept and shining everydele.

About her necke a flower of fresh devise,
With rubies set, that lusty were to sene,
And she in goun was light and summer wise,
Shapen full wele, the colour was of grene,
With aureat sent about her sides clene,
With divers stones precious and rich,
Thus was she rayed, yet saw I never her lich.

For if that Jove had but this lady seine,
Tho Calixto ne yet Alcmenia
They never hadden in his armes leine,
Ne he had loved the faire Europa,
Ye, ne yet Dane ne Antiopa,
For all their beauty stood in Rosiall,
She seemed lich a thing celestiall.

In bounty, favour, port, and seemelinesse,
Pleasaunt of figure, mirrour of delite,
Gracious to seene, and root of all gentilnesse,
With angell visage, lusty redde and white:
There was not lack, saufe daunger had alite
This goodly fresh in rule and governaunce,
And somdele strange she was for her pleasaunce.

And truly sone I took my leave and went,
Whan she had me enquired what I was,
For more and more impressen gan the dent
Of Loves dart while I beheld her face,
And eft againe I come to seeken grace,
And up I put my bill with sentence clere,
That followeth after, rede and ye shall here.

"O ye fresh, of beauty the root,
That nature hath formed so wele and made
Princes and quene, and ye that may do boot
Of all my languor with your words glad,
Ye wounded me, ye made me wo bestad;
Of grace redresse my mortall greefe, as yo
Of all my harme the very causer be.

"Now am I caught, and unware suddainly
With persaunt streames of your eye so clere,
Subject to been and serven you mekely,
And all your man, ywis my lady dere,
Abiding grace, of which I you requere,
That mercilesse ye cause me not to sterve,
But guerdon me liche as I may deserve.

"For by my troth, all the days of my breath
I am and will be your in will and herte,
Patient and meeke, for you to suffer death
If it require, now rue upon my smart,
And this I swere, I never shall out start
From Loves Court for none adversitie,
So ye would rue on my distresse and me.

"My desteny, my fate, and houre I blisse
That have me set to been obedient
Onely to you, the floure of all ywis;
I trust to Venus never to repent,
For ever redy, glad and diligent
Ye shall me find in service to your grace,
Till death my life out of my body race.

"Humble unto your excellence so digne,
Enforcing aye my wits and delite
To serve and please with glad herte and benigne,
And been as Troylus Troyes knight,
Or Antonie for Cleopatre bright,
And never you me thinkes to renay,
This shall I keepe unto mine ending day.

"Enprint my speech in your memoriall
Sadly my princes, salve of all my sore,
And think, that for I would becommen thrall,
And been your owne, as I have sayd before,
Ye must of pity cherish more and more
Your man, and tender after his desert,
And give him courage for to been expert.

"For where that one hath set his herte on fire,
And findeth neither refute ne pleasaunce,
Ne word of comfort, death will quite his hire,
Alas, that there is none allegeaunce
Of all their wo, alas, the great grevaunce
To love unloved, but ye, my lady dere,
In other wise may governe this matere."

"Truly gramercy friend of your good will,
And of your profer in your humble wise,
But for your service, take and keep it still,
And where ye say, I ought you well to cherise,
And of your greefe the remedy devise,
I know not why: I n'am acquainted well
With you, ne wot not sothly where ye dwell."

"In art of love I write, and songes make,
That may be song in honour of the king
And quene of love, and than I undertake,
He that is sadde shall than full merry sing,
And daungerous not ben in every thing;
Beseech I you but seene my will and rede,
And let your answere put me out of drede."

"What is your name? rehearse it here I pray,
Of whence and where, of what condition
That ye been of; let see, come off and say;
Faine would I know your disposition;
Ye have put on your old entention,
But what ye mean to serve me I ne wote,
Saufe that ye say ye love me wonder hote."

"My name, alas my herte, why makes thou straunge?
Philogenet I calld am fer and nere,
Of Cambridge clerk, that never think to chaunge
Fro you that with your hevenly stremes clere
Ravish mine herte and ghost, and all infere,
Since at the first I write my bill for grace,
Me thinke I see some mercy in your face.

"And what I mene, by gods that all hath wrought,
My bill now maketh finall mention,
That ye been lady in my inward thought
Of all mine herte withouten offencion,
That I best love, and sith I begon
To draw to court, lo, than what might I say,
I yeeld me here unto your nobley.

"And if that I offend, or wilfully
By pomp of herte your precept disobay,
Or done again your will unskilfully,
Or greven you for earnest or for play,
Correct ye me right sharply than I pray,
As it is seene unto your womanhede,
And rew on me, or els I n'am but dede."

"Nay, God forbede to feffe you so with grace,
And for a word of sugred eloquence,
To have compassion in so little space,
Than were it time that some of us were hens,
Ye shall not find in me such insolence:
Eye what is this, may ye not suffre sight?
How may ye looke upon the candle light,

"That clerer is and hotter than mine eie?
And yet ye sayd the beames perse and frete,
How shall ye than the candle light endrie?
For well wote ye, that hath the sharper hete;
And there ye bid me you correct and bete,
If ye offend, nay, that may not be done,
There come but few that speden here so sone.

"Withdraw your eie, withdraw from presens eke:
Hurt not your selfe, through foly with a look,
I would be sorry so to make you sicke,
A woman should beware eke whom she took:
Ye beth a clerke, go serchen well my book,
If any women ben so light to winne;
Nay, bide a while; tho ye were all my kinne,

"So sone ye may not win mine herte in truth;
The guise of court will seen your steadfastnesse,
And as you done to have upon you reuth,
Your owne desert, and lowly gentilnesse,
That will reward you joy for heavinesse;
And tho ye waxen pale, and grene, and dede,
Ye must it use a while withouten drede,

"And it accept and grutchen in no wise;
But where as ye me heartely desire
To lene to love, me thinke ye be not wise;
Cease of your language, cease I you require,
For he that hath this twenty yeare ben here
May not obtaine, than marvaile I that ye
Be now so bold of love to treat with me."

"Ah mercy herte, my lady and my love!
My rightwise princesse and my lives guide!
Now may I plaine to Venus all above,
That ruthlesse ye me gave this wound so wide;
What have I done? why may it not betide,
That for my trouth I may received be?
Alas than, your daunger and your cruelte!

"In wofull houre I got was welaway,
In woful houre fostred and yfedde,
In wofull houre yborne, that I ne may;
My supplication sweetly have I spedde,
The frosty grave and cold must be my bedde,
Without ye list your grace and mercy shewe,
Death with his axe so fast on me doth hewe.

"So great disease and in so littell while,
So littel joy that felte I never yet,
And at my wo Fortune ginneth to smile,
That never earst I felt so hard a fit:
Confounden ben my spirites and my wit,
Till that my lady take me to her cure,
Which I love best of erthly creature.

"But that I like, that may I not come by,
Of that I plain, that have I habondaunce,
Sorrow and thought they sit me wonder nie,
Me is withold that might be my pleasaunce:
Yet turne againe my worldly suffisaunce,
O lady bright, and saufe your faithfull true,
And, or I die, yet ones upon me rewe!"

With that I fell in sound and dede as stone,
With colour slaine and wanne as asshe pale,
And by the hand she caught me up anon,
"Arise," (quod she) "what have ye dronken dwale?
Why slepen ye? it is no nightertale:"
"Now mercy sweete," (quod I) "ywis affraied:"
"What thing" (quod she) "hath made you so dismaied?

"Now wote I well that ye a lover be,
Your hew is witnesse in this thing," she said:
"If ye were secret, ye might know," (quod she)
"Curteis and kind, all this shuld be alaid:
And now mine herte, al that I have missaid,
I shall amend and set your herte in ease."
"That word it is," (quod I) "that doth me please."

"But this I charge, that ye the stents keepe,
And breke them not for slouth nor ignoraunce."
With that she gan to smile and laughen depe,
"Ywis," (quod I) "I will do your pleasaunce:
The sixteenth statute doth me great grevaunce,
But ye must that release or modifie."
"I graunt," (quod she) "and so I will truly."

And softly than her colour gan appere,
As rose so red throughout her visage all,
Wherefore me thinke it is according here,
That she of right be cleped Rosiall:
Thus have I won with wordes great and small
Some goodly worde of her, that I love best,
And trust she shall yet sette mine herte in rest.

"Goth on," she said to Philobone, "and take
This man with you, and lede him all about
Within the court, and shewe him for my sake
What lovers dwell within, and all the rout
Of officers him shew, for he is out of dout
A straunger yet:"—"Come on," (quod Philobone)
"Philogenet, with me now must ye gon."

And stalkyng soft with easie pace, I saw,
About the kyng stonden all environ,
Attendaunce, Diligence, and their felow
Fortherer, Asperaunce, and many one,
Dred to offend, there stood, and not alone,
For there was eke the cruell adversair,
The lovers foe that cleped is Dispair.

Which unto me spake angrely and fell,
And said, "My lady me disceive ne shall:
Trowest thou," (quod she) "that all that she did tell,
Is true? nay, nay, but under hony gall,
Thy birth and hers they be nothing egall:
Cast of thine herte for all her words white,
For in good faith she loveth thee but a lite.

"And eke remembre thine habilite
May not compare with her, this well thou wot:"
Ye then came Hope and said, "My frend, let be,
Beleve him not; Dispaire he ginneth dote:"
"Alas," (quod I) "here is both cold and hote,
The one me biddeth love, the toder nay;
Thus wote I not what me is best to say.

"But well wote I, my lady graunted me
Truly to be my woundes remedie,
Her gentilness may not infected be
With doublenesse, thus trust I till I die."
So cast I to voide Dispaires company,
And taken Hope to councel and to friend.
"Yea, keep that well," (quod Philobone) "in mind."

And there beside within a bay window,
Stod one in grene ful large of brede and length,
His beard as black as fethers of the crow,
His name was Lust, of wonder might and strength,
And with Delite to argue there he think'th,
For this was all his opinion,
That love was sinne: and so he hath begon

To reason fast, and ledge auctoritie:
"Nay," (quod Delite) "love is a vertue clere,
And from the soule his progresse holdeth he:
Blind apetite of lust doth often stere,
And that is sinne: for reason lacketh there,
For thou dost think thy neighbours wife to win:
Yet thinke it well that love may not be sinne.

"For God and seint they love right verely,
Void of all sinne and vice this know I well,
Affection of flesh is sin truly,
But verray love is vertue as I fele,
For love may thy freill desire ackele:

For verray love is love, withouten sinne:"
"Now stint," (quod Lust) "thou speketh not worth
a pinne."

And there I left them in their arguing,
Roming ferther in the castell wide,
And in a corner Lier stode talking,
Of lesings fast, with Flatery there beside,
He said that woman were attire of pride,
And men were found of nature variaunt,
And could be false and shewen beau semblaunt.

Than Flatery bespake and said, "Ywis
See so she goth on patens faire and fete,
It doth right well: what prety man is this
That rometh here? now truly drink ne mete
Nede I not have, mine herte for joy doth bete
Him to behold, so is he goodly freshe:
It semeth for love his herte is tender and neshe."

This is the court of lusty folke and glad,
And well becommeth their abite and array,
O why be some so sory and so sad,
Complaining thus in blacke and white and gray?
Freres they ben, and monkes in good fay:
Alas, for routh great dole it is to seene,
To see them thus bewaile and sory been.

See how they cry and wring their handes white,
For they so sone went to religion,
And eke the nonnes with vayle and wimple plight,
Their thought is, they ben in confusion:
"Alas," they sain, "we fain perfection
In clothes wide, and lacke our libertie,
But all the sinne mote on our frends be.

"For Venus wote, we wold as faine as ye,
That bene attired here and welbesene,
Desiren man and love in our degre,
Ferm and faithful right as wold the quene:
Our frends wicke in tender youth and grene,
Ayenst our will made us religious,
That is the cause we mourn and wailen thus."

Than said the monk and freres in the tide,
"Wel may we curse our abbes and our place,
Our statutes sharpe to sing in copes wide,
Chastely to keepe us out of loves grace,
And never to fele comfort ne solace:
Yet suffre we the heate of loves fire,
And after that some other haply we desire.

"O Fortune cursed, why now and wherefore
Hast thou," they said, "berafte us libertie,
Sith nature yave us instrument in store,
And appetite to love and lovers be?
Why mote we suffer such adversite,
Diane to serve, and Venus to refuse?
Ful often sithe this matters doth us muse.

"We serve and honour sore ayenst our will,
Of chastite the goddes and the queene,
Us leefer were with Venus biden still,
And have reward for love and soget bene
Unto these women courtly, fresh, and shene;
Fortune we curse thy wheele of variance,
There we were well thou revest our plesance."

Thus leave I them with voice of plaint and care,
In raging wo crying full pitously,
And as I yede full naked and full bare,
Some I behold looking dispitously,
On poverty that dedly cast their eye,
And "Welaway," they cried, and were not faine,
For they ne might their glad desire attaine.

For lacke of richesse worldly and good,
They banne and curse, and weep, and sain, "Alas,
That poverty hath us hent that whilom stood
At hertes ease, and free and in good case,
But now we dare not shew our self in place,
Ne us embold to dwell in company,
There as our herte wold love right faithfully."

And yet againward shriked every nonne,
The pange of love so straineth them to crie:
"Now wo the time," (quod they) "that we be boun
This hatefull ordre nise will done us die,
We sighe and sobbe, and bleden inwardly,
Freting ourself with thought and hard complaint,
That nie for love we waxen wood and faint."

And as I stood beholding here and there,
I was ware of a sort full languishing,
Savage and wild of loking and of chere,
Their mantelles and their clothes ay tering,
And oft they were of nature complaining,
For they their members lacked, foot and hand,
With visage wry, and blind I understand.

They lacked shape and beauty to preferre
Themself in love: and said that God and kind,
Hath forged them to worshippen the sterre,
Venus the bright, and leften all behind
His other werkes clene and out of mind:
"For other have their full shape and beauty,
And we" (quod they) "been in deformity."

And nie to them there was a company
That have the susters warried and missaide,
I meane the three of fatal destiny,
That be our workers: sodenly abraide
Out gan they cry as they had been affraide,
"We curse," (quod they) "that ever hath nature,
Yformed us this wofull life to endure."

And there eke was Contrite and gan repent,
Confessing hole the wound that Cithere
Hath with the darte of hote desire him sent,
And how that he to love must subject be;
Than held he all his skornes vanity,
And said that lovers held a blisful life,
Yong men and old, and widow, maid and wife.

"Bereve me goddesse," (quod he) "of thy might
My skornes all and skoffes, that I have
No power for to moken any wight,
That in thy service dwell: for I did rave:
This know I well right now so god me save,
And I shal be the chief post of thy faith,
And love uphold, the revers who so saith."

Dissemble stode not ferre from him in troth,
With party mantil party hode and hose,
And said he had upon his lady routh,
And thus he wound him in, and gan to glose
Of his entent ful double I suppose,
In all the world he said he loved her wele,
But ay me thought he loved her nere a dele.

Eke Shamfastnesse was there as I tooke hede,
That blushed rede, and durst nat ben aknow
She lover was, for thereof had she drede;
She stode and hing her visage downe alow,

But such a sight it was to seene I trow,
As of these roses rody on their stalke,
There coud no wight her spy to speak or talk.

In loves art so gan she to abashe,
Ne durst not utter al her previty:
Many a stripe and many a grevous lashe
She gaven to them that wolden lovers be,
And hindered sore the simple comonalty,
That in no wise durst grace and mercy crave,
For were not she they need but ask and have,

Where if they now aprochen for to speke,
Than Shamefastnesse returneth them again:
They thinke, if we our secrets counsel breke,
Our ladies wil have scorn on us certain,
And peraventure thinken great disdain:
Thus Shamefastnesse may bringen in Dispeire,
Whan she is dede the toder will be heire.

Come forth a Vaunter, now I ring thy bel,
I spied him sone, to God I make a vowe,
He loked blacke as fendes doth in Hell,
"The first," (quod he) "that ever I did wowe,
Within a worde she come, I wotte not how,
So that in armes was my lady free,
And so hath ben a thousand mo than she.

"In England, Britain, Spain, and Picardy,
Artois, and Fraunce, and up in hie Holand,
In Burgoine, Naples, and Italy,
Naverne, and Grece, and up in hethen lond
Was never woman yet that wold withstond,
To ben at [my] commaundement whan I wold,
I lacked neither silver, coigne, ne gold.

"And there I met with this estate and that,
And her I broched, her, and her I trow:
Lo, there goeth one of mine, and wotte ye what?
Yon fresh attired have I laid full low,
And such one yonder eke right well I know:
I kept the statute whan we lay yfere,
And yet yon same hath made me right good chere."

Thus hath a Vaunter blowen every where,
Al that he knoweth, and more a thousand fold;
His auncestry of kisse was to Liere,
For first he maketh promise for to hold
His ladies counsel, and it not unfold,
Wherfore the secret whan he doth unshitte,
Than lieth he, that all the world may witte.

For falsing so his promise and behest,
I wounder sore he hath such fantasie,
He lacketh wit I trow or is a beast,
That can no bet himself with reason gie,
By mine advise love shall be contrary
To his availe, and him eke dishonour,
So that in court he shall no more sojour.

"Take heed," (quod she) this little Philobone,
"Where Envy rocketh in the corner yond,
And sitteth dirke, and ye shall see anone
His leane body fading both face and hond,
Himselfe he fretteth as I understond,
Witnesse of Ovid methamorphoose,
The lovers fo he is, I will not glose.

"For where a lover thinketh him promote
Envy will grutch, repining at his wele,
It swelleth sore about his hertes rote,
That in no wise he cannot live in hele,
And if the faithful to his lady stele,
Envy will noise and ring it round about,
And sey much worse than done is out of dout."

And Privy Thought rejoysing of himselfe,
Stood not ferre thence in abite marvellous,
"Yon is," (thought I) "some spirit or some elfe,
His subtill image is so curious:
How is," (quod I) "that he is shaded thus
With yonder cloth, I n'ot of what colour?"
And nere I went and gan to lere and pore;

And framed him a question full hard,
"What is," (quod I) "the thing thou lovest best,
Or what is bote unto thy paines hard?
Me thinke thou livest here in great unrest,
Thou wandrest aye from south to east and west,
And east to north as ferre as I can see,
There is no place in court may holden thee.

"Whom followest thou, where is thy herte yset?
But my demaund asoile I thee require."
"Me thought," (quod he) "no creature may let
Me to ben here, and where as I desire:
For where as absence hath done out the fire,
My mery thought it kindeleth yet againe,
That bodely me thinke with my soveraine

"I stand and speake, and laugh, and kisse, and halse;
So that my thought comforteth me ful oft:
I think god wote, though al the world be false,
I will be true, I thinke also how soft
My lady is in speach, and this on loft
Bringeth min herte with joy and great gladnes,
This privy thought alayeth mine heavines.

"And what I thinke or where to be, no man
In all this Earth can tell ywis but I;
And eke there n'is no swalow swift, ne swan
So wight of wing, ne half so yerne can flie;
For I can bene and that right sodenly,
In Heven, in Hell, in Paradise, and here,
And with my lady whan I will desire.

"I am of counsell ferre and wide I wote,
With lorde and lady, and their privite
I wotte it all, and be it colde or hote,
They shall not speake without licence of me,
I mine in soch as seasonable be,
For first the thing is thought within the hart,
Ere any word out from the mouth astart."

And with the word Thought bad farewel and yede:
Eke forth went I to seene the courts guise,
And at the doore came in, so God me spede,
Twenty courteours of age and of assise
Liche high, and brode, and as I me advise,
The Golden Love, and Leden Love they hight,
The tone was sad, the toder glad and light.

"Yes draw your herte with all your force and might,
To lustinesse and ben as ye have seid,
And thinke that I no drope of favour hight,
Ne never had unto your desire obeid,
Till sodenly me thought me was affraied,
To seene you waxe so dede of countenaunce,
And Pite bade me done you some pleasaunce.

"Out of her shrine she rose from death to live,
And in mine eare full prively she spake,
'Doth not your servaunt hens away to drive,
Rosial,' (quod she) and than mine herte it brake,

For tendericbe: and where I found moch lacke,
In your person, than I my selfe bethought,
And saide, this is the man mine hearte hath sought."

"Gramercy Pity, might I but suffise,
To yeve due laude unto thy shrine of gold,
God wotte I would: for sith that thou did rise
From death to live for me, I am behold
To thanken you a thousand times told,
And eke my lady Rosial the shene,
Which hath in comfort set mine herte ywene.

"And here I make mine protestacion,
And depely swere as mine power to bene
Faithful, devoide of variacion,
And her forbeare in anger or in tene,
And serviceable to my worldes quene,
With al my reason and intelligence,
To done her honour high and reverence."

I had not spoke so sone the worde, but she,
My soveraine, did thanke me hertely,
And said, "Abide, ye shall dwell still with me,
Till season come of May, for than truly,
The king of love and all his company,
Shall hold his feste full rially and well,"
And there I bode till that the season fell.

On May day whan the larke began to rise,
To matens went the lusty nightingale,
Within a temple shapen hauthorn wise,
He might not slepe in all the nightertale,
But "*Domine labia*," gan he cry and gale,
"My lippes open lord of love I cry,
And let my mouth thy preising now bewry."

The egle sang "*Venite* bodies all,
And let us joy to love that is our health,"
And to the deske anon they gan to fall,
And who came late he preesed in by stealth:
Than sayd the faucon our own hertes wealth,
"*Domine Dominus noster* I wote,
Ye be the God that done us brenne thus hote."

"*Cœli enarrant*," said the popingay,
"Your might is told in Heaven and firmanent,"
And than came in the gold-finch freshe and gay,
And said this psalme with hertily glad intent
"*Domini est terra*," this laten intent,
The God of love hath yerth in governaunce:
And than the wren gan skippen and to daunce.

"*Jube Domino* O lord of love, I pray
Commaund me well this lesson for to rede,
This legende is of all that woulden dey
Martires for love, God yet the souls spede:
And to thee Venus sing we out of drede,
By influence of all thy vertue great,
Besechyng thee to keepe us in our heat."

The second lesson robin redebrest sang,
"Haile to the god and goddes of our lay,"
And to the lectorne amorously he sprong,
"Haile now," (quod eke) "O fresh season of May,
Our moneth glad that singen on the spray,
Haile to the floures, rede, and white, and blewe,
Which by their vertue maketh our lust new."

The third lesson the turtil dove toke up,
And thereat lough the mavis in a scorne,
He said, "O God, as mote I dine or suppe,
This folish dove will give us al an horne,
There ben right here a thousand better borne,
To rede this lesson, which as well as he,
And eke as hote, can love in all degree."

The turtil dove said, "Welcom, welcom May,
Gladsom and light to lovers that ben trew:
I thanke thee lord of love that doth purvey,
For me to rede this lesson al of dewe,
For in good soth of corage I pursue,
To serve my make till death us must depart,"
And than "*Tu autem*" sang he all apart.

"*Te deum amoris*" sang the throstel cocke;
Tuball himselfe the first musician,
With key of armony coude not onlocke,
So swete tewne as that the throstel can:
"The lorde of love we praysen," (quod he) than,
And so done al the foules great and lite,
"Honour we May, in fals lovers dispite."

"*Dominus regnavit*," said the pecocke there,
"The lord of love that mighty prince ywis,
He is received here and every where:
Now Jubilate sing:"—"What meaneth this?"
Said than the linet; "welcome lord of blisse:"
Out sterte the owle with "*Benedicite*,"
"What meaneth all this mery fare?" (quod he.)

"*Laudate*," sang the larke with voice ful shril,
And eke the kight "*O admirabile*,
This quere wil thorow mine ears pers and thril,
But what, welcome this May season," (quod he)
"And honour to the lord of love mote be,
That hath this feste so solempne and so hie,"
"*Amen*," said al, and so said eke the pie.

And forth the cockow gan procede anon,
With "*Benedictus*" thanking God in hast,
That in this May would visite them echon,
And gladden them all while the feast shal last,
And therewithal a laughter out he brast,
"I thanke it God that I should end the song,
And all the service which hath ben so long."

Thus sang they all the service of the feste,
And that was done right erly to my dome,
And forth goth all the court both most and leste,
To fetch the floures fresh, and braunch and blome,
And namely hauthorn brought both page and grome
With fresh garlants party blew and white,
And than rejoysen in their great delite.

Eke ech at other threw the floures bright,
The primerose, the violete, and the gold,
So than as I beheld the royall sight,
My lady gan me sodenly behold,
And with a trewe love plited many a fold,
She smote me through the very heart as blive,
And Venus yet I thanke I am alive.

EXPLICIT.

THE COMPLAINT OF PITIE.

HOW PITIE IS DEAD AND BURIED IN A GENTLE HERTE

v. 1—98

PITIE that I have sought so yore agon
With herte sore, and full of besie paine,
That in this worlde was never wight so wo
Without deathe, and if I shall not faine,
My purpose was to Pitie to complaine
Upon the cruelty and tyranny
Of Love, that for my trouth doth me dye.

And that I by length of certaine yeares
Had ever in one sought a time to speke,
To Pitie ran I, all bespreint with teares,
To prayen her on Cruelty me awreke ;
But or I might with any word out breake,
Or tell her any of my paines smerte,
I found her dead and buried in an herte.

Adowne I fell, whan I saw the herse,
Dead as a stone, while that swoone me last,
But up I rose with colour full diverse,
And pitously on her mine eyen I cast,
And nearer the corse I gan preasen fast,
And for the soule I shope me for to pray,
I was but lorne, there was no more to say.

Thus am I slaine, sith that Pitie is dead,
Alas, the day that ever it should fall !
What maner man dare now hold up his head ?
To whom shall now any sorrowful herte call ?
Now Cruelty hath cast to slee us all
In idle hope, folke rechelesse of paine,
Sith she is dead, to whom shall we complaine ?

But yet encreaseth me this wonder new,
That no wight wote that she is dead but I,
So many men as in her time her knew,
And yet she deyde so suddainly,
For I have sought her ever full busily,
Sith I had first wit or mind,
But she was dead, ere I could her find.

About her herse there stooden lustily
Withouten any mo, as thoughte me,
Bounty, perfitely well armed and richely,
And fresh Beaute, Lust, and Jolite,
Assured-manner, Youth, and Honeste,
Wisedome, Estate, Drede, and Governaunce,
Confedred both by bond and alliaunce.

A complaint had I written in my honde,
To have put to Pitie, as a bill,
But I there all this company fonde,
That rather would all my cause spill,
Than do me helpe : I hold my plaint still
For to those folke withouten faile,
Without Pitie there may no bill avail.

Than leave all vertues, save only Pitie,
Keping the corse, as ye have heard me saine,
Confedred by honde until Crueltie,
And be assented whan I shall be slaine ;
And I have put my complainte up againe,
For to my foes my bill I dare not shewe
The effect, which saith thus in wordes fewe.

" Humblest of herte, highest of reverence,
Benigne floure, croune of vertues all,
Sheweth unto your royall excellence
Your servaunt, if I durst me so call,
His mortall harme in which he is yfall,
And nought all only for his wofull fare,
But for your renome, as he shall declare.

" It standeth thus, that contraire Crueltie
Allied is ayenst your regaltie
Under colour of womanly beautie,
(For men should not know her tyrannie)
With Bountie, Gentillesse, and Courtesie,
And hath deprived you of your place,
That is hie beautie, appertenaunt to your grace.

" For Kindly, by your heritage right
Ye be annexed ever unto Bountie,
And verely ye ought to doe your might
To helpe Trouth in his adversitie :
Ye be also the croune of beautie,
And certes, if ye want in these twaine
The world is lore, there is no more to saine.

" Eke what availeth manner and gentilesse
Without you, benigne creature ?
Shall Crueltie be your governeresse ?
Alas, what herte may it long endure ?
Wherefore, but ye rather take cure
To breake that perilous alliaunce,
Ye sleen hem that been in your obeysaunce.

" And further, if ye suffer this,
Your renome is fordo in a throw,
There shall no man wete what pitie is,
Alas, that ever your renome is fall so low !
Ye be also fro your heritage ythrow ;
But Crueltie, that occupieth your place,
And we dispaired that seeken your grace.

" Have mercy on me, thou Herenus, queene,
That you have sought so tenderly and sore ;
Let some streame of light on me be seene,
That love and drede you ever lenger the more ;
For soothly to saine, I beare so sore,
And though I be not conning for to plaine,
For Goddes love have mercy on my paine !

"My paine is this, that nought so I desire,
That have I not, ne nothing like thereto
And ever setteth Desire mine herte on fire,
Eke on that other side where that I go,
What maner thing that may encrease my wo,
That have I ready unsought every where,
Me lacketh but my death, and then my bere.

"What nedeth to shew parcell of my paine?
Sith every wo, that herte may bethinke,
I suffer, and yet I dare not to you plaine,
For well I wote, though I wake or winke,
Ye recke not whether I flete or sinke;
And nathelesse yet my trouth I shall susteine
Unto my death, and that shall well be sene.

"This is to saine, I will be yours ever,
Though ye me slee by Crueltie your fo,
Algate my spirit shall never discever
Fro your service, fro any paine or wo.
Sith ye be yet dead, alas, that it is so!
Thus for your death I maye wepe and plaine
With herte sore, and full of busie paine."

EXPLICIT.

OF QUEEN ANNELIDA AND FALSE ARCITE.

v. 1—83

"O THOU fiers God of armes, Mars the rede,
That in thy frosty countrey called Thrace,
Within thy grisly temples full of drede,
Honoured art as patrone of that place,
With thee Bellona, Pallas full of grace,
Be present, and my song continue and gie!
At my beginning thus to thee I crie.

"For it full depe is sonken in my mindo
With pitous herte, in English to endite
This old story, in Latine which I finde,
Of queene Annelida and false Arcite,
That elde, which all can frete and bite,
(And it hath freten many a noble story,)
Hath nigh devoured out of our memory.

"Be favourable eke thou Polimnia,
On Pernaso that hath thy sisters glade,
By Elicon, not far from Cirsa,
Singest with voice memorial in the shade,
Under the laurer, which that may not fade,
And do that I my ship to haven winne!
First follow I Stace, and after him Corinne."

Jamque domos patrias Cithiæ post aspera gentis,
Prælia laurigeo subeuntem Thesea curru,
Lætifici plausus missusque ad sidera vulgi, &c.

Whan Theseus with warres long and great,
The aspre folke of Cithe had overcome,
The laurer crowned in his chaire gold beat,
Home to his country houses is ycome,
For which the people blisful all and some,
So criden, that to the sterres it went,
And him to honouren did all hir entent.

Before this duke in sign of victory,
The trompes come, and in his baner large,
The image of Mars, and in token of glory,
Men might see of treasure many a charge,
Many a bright helm, and many a spere and targe,
Many a fresh knight, and many a blisful rout,
On horse and on foot, in all the field about.

Ipolita his wife, the hardy queene
Of Cithia, that he conquered had,
With Emily her young suster shene,
Faire in a chaire of gold he with him lad,
That all the ground about her chair she sprad
With brightness of beauty in her face,
Fulfilled of largesse and of grace.

With his triumph and laurer crowned thus,
In all the floure of fortunes yeving,
Let I this noble prince Theseus
Toward Athenes in his way riding,
And fonde I woll in shortly to bring
The slye way of that I gan to write,
Of queene Annelida and false Arcite.

Mars, that through his furious course of ire,
The old wrath of Juno to fulfill,
Hath set the peoples hertes both on fire
Of Thebes and Grece, and everich other to kill
With bloody speres, rested never still,
But throng now here, now there, among hem both,
That everich other slue, so were they wroth.

For whan Amphiorax and Tideus,
Ipomedon and Partinope also
Were dedde, and slain proud Campaneus,
And whan the wretched Thebans brethren two
Were slain, and king Adrastus home ygo,
So desolate stood Thebes and so bare,
That no wight could remedy his care.

And whan the old Creon gan espy
How that the blood royal was brought adown,
He held the citee by his tyranny,
And did the gentils of that regioun
To been his friends, and dwell in the toun,
So what for love of him, and what for awe,
The noble folke were to the towne ydrawe.

Among all these, Annelida the queene
Of Ermony was in that towne dwelling,
That fairer was than the Sonne sheene,
Throughout the world so gan her name spring,
That her to see had every wight liking,
For as of trouth, is there none her liche
Of all the women in this world riche.

Yong was this queene, of twenty yere old,
Of middle stature, and of soch fairnesse,
That Nature had a joy her to behold,

o speaken of her stedfastnesse,
d hath Penelope and Lucresse,
ıly if she may ben comprehended,
ght nothing been amended.

ıan knight eke sothe to sain,
;, therto withall a lusty knight,
ıs double in love, and nothing plain,
ll in that craft over any wight,
his cunning wan this lady bright:
forth he gan her trouth assure,
him trusteth over any creature.

uld I sain? she loveth Arcite so
n that he was absent any throw,
r thought her herte brast atwo,
r sight to her he bare him low,
ıe wende have all his herte yknow,
ıs false, it n'as but fayned chere,
ı not soche crafte men to lere.

rthelesse, full mikell businesse
r that he might his lady winne,
e he would dien for distresse,
ıis witte he said he would twinne:
while! for it was routh and sinne,
upon his sorrowes would rue,
ng thinketh the false as doth the true.

ıme found Arcite in soch manere,
vas his that she hath, moch or lite,
creature made she cheer,
han it liked to Arcite,
s no lack with which he might her wite,
o ferforth yeven him to please,
hat liked him did her ease.

s to her no maner letter sent,
hed love, from any maner wight,
ne shewed him, or it was brent,
he was, and did her full might,
n'il hide nothing from her knight,
f any untrouth her upbreyde;
ode his herte she obeyd.

ıe made him jalous over her,
t that any man had to her sayd,
would praien her to swere
ı that word, or make him yvell apaid,
ıde she out of her wit have braid,
as but sleight and flatterie,
ove he fained jelousie.

ıis tooke she so debonairly,
ıis will her thought it skilful thing,
the lenger she loved him tenderly,
ıim honour as he were a king,
ı was to him wedded with a ring,
forth upon trouth is her entent,
re he goth her herte with him went.

ı shal eat, on him is so her thought,
unneth of meate toke she keepe,
ı she was to her rest brought,
he thought alway till that she slepe,
was absent, prively doth she wepe;
th faire Annelida the queene,
Arcite, that did her all this tene,

Arcite, of his newfanglenesse,
o him so lowly was and trewe,
Tooke lesse deintee for her stedfastnesse,
And saw another lady proude and newe,
And right anon he clad him in her hewe,
Wote I not whether in white, reed, or grene,
And falsed faire Annelida the queene.

But nevertheless, great wonder was it none
Though he were false, for it is the kind of man,
Sith Lamech was, that is so long agone,
To be in love as false as ever he can,
He was the first father that began
To loven two, and was in bigamye.
And he found tents first, but if men lye.

This false Arcite, somewhat must he faine,
Whan he was false, to coveren his tratourie,
Right as an horse, that can both bite and plaine,
For he bare her in honde of treacherie,
And swore he coude her doublenesse espye,
And all was falsenesse that she to him ment;
Thus swore this thefe, and forth his way he went

Alas, what herte might endure it,
For routhe or wo, her sorrow for to tell?
Or what man hath the cunning or the wit,
Or what man might within the chambre dwell,
If I to him rehersen shall the Hell
That suffreth fayre Annelida the queene,
For false Arcite, that did her all this tene?

She wepeth, waileth, and swouneth pitously,
To ground deed she falleth as a stone
Crampisheth her limmes crokedly,
She speketh as her witte were all agone,
Other colour than ashen hath she none,
Ne none other word speketh she moch or lite,
But "Mercy, cruell herte, mine Arcite."

And thus endureth, til that she was so mate
That she ne hath foot, on which she may sustene,
But forth languishing ever in this estate,
Of which Arcite hath neyther routhe ne tene,
His herte was elswhere newe and grene,
That on her wo, ne deineth him not to think,
Him recketh never whether she flete or sinke.

This newe lady holdeth him so narowe,
Up by the bridel, at the staves end,
That every word he dred it as an arowe,
Her daunger made him both bowe and bend,
And as her luste, made him turne or wend,
For she ne graunted him in her living,
No grace, why that he hath to sing.

But drove him forth, unneth list her know
That he was servaunt unto her ladyship,
But lest he were proude, she helde him lowe,
Thus serveth he, without meate or sip,
She sent him now to land, and now to ship,
And for she yave him daunger all his fill,
Therfore she had him at her owne will.

Ensample of this, ye thrifty women all,
Take hede of Annelida and false Arcite,
That for her list him her dere herte call,
And was so meke, therefore he loved her lite,
The kinde of mannes herte is to delite
On thing that straunge is, al so God me save,
For what they may not get, that wold they have.

Now turne we to Annelida ayen,
That pineth day by day in languishing,
But whan she saw that her ne gate no geyn,
Upon a day full sorrowfully wepying,
She cast her for to make a complaining,
And with her owne hand she gan it write,
And sent it to her Theban knight Arcite.

THE COMPLAINT OF ANNELIDA TO FALSE ARCITE.

"So thirled with the point of remembraunce,
The swerde of sorowe, whette with false pleasaunce,
Mine herte bare of blisse, and black of hew
That turned is to quaking all my daunce,
My sewerty is a waped countenaunce,
Seus it avayleth nought to ben trew:
For who so trew is, it shall her rew,
That serveth love, and doth her observaunce
Alway to one, and chaungeth for no new.

"I wote my selfe as well as any wight,
For I loved one, with all mine herte and might
More than my self an hundred thousand sith,
And called him my hertes life, my knight,
And was all his, as ferre as it was right,
And whan that he was glad, than was I blithe,
And his disease was my death as swithe,
And he ayen, his trouth hath me plight,
For evermore hys lady me to kithe.

"Now is he false alas, and causeles,
And of my wo he is so routhles,
That with a worde him list not ones daine,
To bring ayen my sorowfull herte in pees,
For he is caught up in another lees;
Right as him list, he laugheth at my paine,
And I ne can mine herte not restraine
For to love him yet alway nevertheles,
And of all this I n'ot to whom to plaine.

"And should I plaine, alas, the hard stounde,
Unto my foe, that yave mine herte a wounde,
And yet desireth that mine harme be more,
Now certes ferther woll I never found,
None other helpe, my sores for to sound,
My desteny hath shaped so full yore,
I woll none other medicine ne lore,
I woll ben aye there I was ones bound,
That I have said, be said for evermore.

"Alas, where is become your gentilnesse,
Your words full of pleasaunce and humblenesse,
Your observaunce in so lowe manere,
Your awayting, and your besinesse,
On me that ye called your maistresse,
Your soveraine lady in this worlde here?
Alas, is there neyther worde ne chere,
Ye vouchsafe upon mine hevinesse?
Alas, your love, I buy it all to dere.

"Now certes swete, though that ye
Thus causelesse the cause be,
Of my deedly adversite,
Your manly reason ought it to respite,
To slee your frende, and namely me,
That never yet in no degre
Offended you, as wisely he
That all wote, of wo my soule quite.

"But for I was so playne, Arcite,
In all my workes much and lite,
And was so besie you to delite,
Myne honour save, meke, kinde, and fre,
Therefore ye put in me this wite:
Alas, ye retche not a mite,
Though that the swerde of sorow bite
My wofull herte, through your cruelty.

"My sweet foe, why do ye so for shame,
And thinke ye that furthered be your name,
To love a newe, and ben untrew aye,
And put you in slander now and blame,
And do to me adversitie and grame,
That love you most, God thou wost, alwaye?
Yet turne ayen, and yet be playne some daye,
And than shall this that now is mis, ben game,
And all foryeve, while I lyve may.

"Lo, herte myne, al this is for to saine,
As whether shall I pray or els plaine,
Which is the way to done you to be trewe?
For either mote I have you in my chaine,
Or with the deth ye mote depart us twaine,
There bethe none other meane wayes new,
For God so wisely on my soule rewe,
As verily ye slaine me with the paine,
That mowe ye see unfained on mine hewe.

"For thus ferforth have I my deth sought,
My selfe I murder with my privie thought,
For sorow and routh of your unkindnesse,
I wepe, I waile, I fast, all helpeth naught,
I voide joy that is to speake of aught,
I voide company, I flie gladnesse;
Who may avaunt her better of hevinesse,
Than I? and to this plite have ye me brought,
Without gilte, me needeth no witnesse.

"And should I pray, and weiven womanhede,
Nay rather death, than do so foule a dede,
And aske mercy and giltlesse, what nede?
And if I plaine what life I lede,
You recketh not, that know I out of drede,
And if I unto you mine othes bede
For mine excuse, a scorne shall be my mede,
Your chere floureth, but it woll not sede,
Full long agon I might have taken hede.

"For though I had you to morow agayne,
I might as well hold Aprill from raine,
As holde you to maken stedfast.
Almighty God, of trouth the soverain,
Where is that trouth of man, who hath it slayn?
She that hem loveth, shall hem find as fast,
As in a tempest is a rotten mast;
Is that a tame beest, that is aye fayne
To renne away, whan he is lest agast?

"Now mercy sweete, if I missay,
Have I aught said out of the way,
I n'ot, my witte is all away,
I fare as doth the songe of chantepleure,
For now I plaine, and now I play,
I am so mased that I dey,
Arcite hath borne away the key
Of all my world, and my good aventure.

"For in this world there is no creature,
Walking in more discomfiture,
Than I, ne more sorowe endure,

·epe a furlonge way or tway,
.eth me that your figure
stant clad in asure,
fre a newe assure,
trewe, and mercy me to pray.

night, this wonder sight ydrie,
e day for such affray I die,
this right naught ywis ye retche,
.ore mine eyen two ben drye,
ır routh, and to your trouth I crie ;
way, to ferre been they to fetch !
·th me my desteny a wretch,
rede out of this drede or gie,
y wit (so weake is it) not stretch.

l I thus, sith I may do no more,
p for now and evermore,
For I shall never efte putten in balaunce
My sikernesse, ne lerne of love the lore,
But as the swan, I have herde say full yore,
Ayenst his deth woll sing in his penaunce,
So sing I here the destinie and chaunce,
How that Arcite, Annelida so sore
Hath thrilled with the point of remembraunce."

Whan that Annelida this wofull queene,
Hath of her hand written in this wise,
With face deed, betwixt pale and greene,
She fell a swoune, and sithe she gan to rise,
And unto Mars avoweth sacrifise
Within the temple, with a sorowful chere,
That shapen was, as ye may plainly here.

EXPLICIT.

THE ASSEMBLY OF FOULES.

v. 1—70.

ɔ short, the craft so long to lerne,
ɔ hard, so sharpe the conquering,
ful joy alway that flit so yerne,
ɜan I by Love, that my feeling
with his wonderful werkyng,
·is, that whan I on him think,
·te I wel, whether I flete or sink.

that I know not Love in dede,
w that he quiteth folke hir hire,
th me full oft in bookes rede
·acles, and of his cruell ire,
ɜ I well, he woll be lorde and sire :
say his strokes be sore,
ave such a lorde, I can no more.

what for lust and what for lore,
rede I of, as I you told,
ɔre speake I all this ? naught yore
ıpped me to behold
oke was ywritten with letters old,
upon a certain thing to lerne,
ıay full fast I radde and yerne.

the old fieldes, as men saithe,
this new corne fro yere to yere,
' old bookes, in good faithe,
this new science that men lere,
ɔ purpose, as of this mattere,
rth it gan me so delite,
at day me thought it but a lite.

· of which I make mencion,
ıs right thus, as I shall tell,
the dreame of Scipion :
seven it had, of Heaven and Hell,
, and soules that therein dwell,
s shortly as I can it treate,
ence I woll you saine the greate.

First telleth it, whan Scipion was come
In Affricke, how he meteth Massinisse,
That him for joy, in armes hath ynome,
Than telleth he hir speach and all the blisse,
That was betwixt hem til the day gan misse,
And how his auncester Affrikan so dere,
Gan in his slepe that night til him appere.

Than telleth it, that from a sterrie place,
How Affrikan hath him Cartage shewed,
And warned him before of all his grace,
And said him, what man lered eyther lewde,
That loveth common profite well ithewde,
He should into a blissfull place wend,
There as the joy is without any end.

Than asked he, if folke that here been dede
Have life, and dwelling in another place ?
And Affrikan said Ye, without any drede,
And how our present lives space
Ment but a maner death, what way we trace,
And rightfull folke, shull gon after they die
To Heaven, and shewed him the Galaxie.

Than shewed he him the little earth that here is
To regard of the Heavens quantite,
And after shewed he hym the nine speris,
And after that the melodie heard he,
That commeth of thilke speres thrise three,
That welles of musicke been and melodie
In this world here, and cause of armonie.

Than said he him, sens Earth was so lite,
And full of tourment, and of harde grace,
That he ne should him in this world delite :
Than told he him, in certain yeres space,
That every sterre should come into his place,
There it was first, and all should out of mind,
That in this world is done of all mankind.

Than prayed him Scipion, to tell him all
The way to come into that Heaven blisse,
And he said: "First know thy selfe immortall,
And loke aie besely that thou werche and wisse
To common profite, and thou shalt not misse
To come swiftly unto that place dere,
That full of blisse is, and of soules clere.

"And breakers of the law, soth to saine,
And likerous folke, after that they been dede,
Shall whirle about the world alway in paine
Till many a world be passed out of drede,
And than, foryeven all hir wicked dede,
Than shullen they come to that blisfull place,
To which to comen, God send thee grace."

The day gan failen, and the darke night
That reveth beastes from hir businesse,
Beraft me my booke for lacke of light,
And to my bedde I gan me for to dresse,
Fulfilled of thought and besie heavinesse,
For both I had thyng, which that I n'old,
And eke I no had that thing that I wold.

But finally my spirite at last,
Forweary of my labour all that day,
Tooke rest, that made me to slepe fast,
And in my sleepe I mette, as that I say,
How Affrikan, right in the selfe aray
That Scipion him saw, before that tide,
Was come, and stode right at my beds side.

The wearie hunter sleeping in his bedde,
The wood ayen his mind goeth anone,
The judge dremeth how his plees be spedde,
The carter dremeth how his cartes gone,
The rich of gold, the knight fights with his fone,
The sicke mette he drinketh of the tonne,
The lover mette he hath his lady wonne.

Can I not saine, if that the cause were
For I had radde of Affrikan beforne,
That made me to mete that he stood there,
But thus said he: "Thou hast thee so well borne
In looking of mine old booke all to torne,
Of which Macrobie raught not a lite,
That some dele of thy labour would I quite."

Citherea, thou blisful lady swete,
That with thy fire brond dauntest whan thee lest,
That madest me this sweven for to mete,
Be thou my helpe in this, for thou maist best,
As wisely as I seigh the north northwest,
Whan I began my sweven for to write,
So yeve me might to rime it and endite.

This foresaid Affrikan me hent anone,
And forthwith him to a gate brought,
Right of a parke, walled with grene stone,
And over the gate, with letters large ywrought,
There were verse ywritten as me thought
On either halfe, of full great difference,
Of which I shall you say the playne sentence:

"Through me men gon into the blisful place
Of hertes heale and dedly woundes cure,
Through me men gon into the well of grace,
There grene and lusty May shall ever endure,
This is the way to all good aventure,
Be glad thou reader, and thy sorow off cast,
All open am I, passe in and spede thee fast."

"Through me men gon" (than spake the other side)
"Unto the mortall strokes of the speare,
Of which Disdaine and Danger is the gide;
There never tree shall fruit ne leaves beare,
This streme you ledeth to the sorowful were,
There as the fish in pryson is all dry,
The eschewing is onely the remedy."

These verses of gold and asure ywritten weare,
Of which I gan astonied to behold,
For with that one encreased all my feare,
And with that other gan my herte to bolde,
That one me hette, that other did me colde,
No wit had I for errour for to chese,
To enter or flie, or me to save or lese.

Right as betwene adamants two,
Of even weight, a peece of yron set
Ne hath no might to move ne to ne fro,
For what that one may hale that other let,
So fared I, that I n'ist where me was bet
To entre or leave, till Affrikan my gide,
Me hent and shove in at the gates wide.

And said, "It standeth written in thy face,
Thine errour, though thou tell it not me,
But dread thee not to come into this place,
For this writing is nothing meant by thee,
Ne by none, but he Love's servaunt bee,
For thou of love hast lost thy tast of gesse,
As sicke men hath, of swete and bitternesse.

"But natheles, although thou be dull,
That thou canst not doe, yet mayst thou see,
For many a man that may not stand a pull,
Yet liketh it him at the wrestlyng for to be,
And demeth yet, whether he doe bet, or he,
And if thou haddest connyng for t'endite,
I shall thee shew matter of to write."

And with that my hand in his he toke anon,
Of which I comfort caught, and went in fast,
But Lord so I was glad, and well begon,
For over all, where I mine eyen cast,
Were trees clad with leaves, that aie shal last
Eche in his kind, with colour fresh and grene,
As emeraude, that joy it was to sene.

The bilder oke, and eke the hardy asshe,
The piller elme, the coffre unto caraine,
The boxe pipe tree, holme to whippes lasshe,
The sailing firre, the cipres death to plaine,
The shooter ewe, the aspe for shaftes plaine,
The olive of peace, and eke the dronken vine,
The victor palme, the laurer too divine.

A gardein saw I full of blosomed bowis,
Upon a river in a grene mede,
There as sweetnesse evermore inough is,
With floures white, blewe, yelowe, and rede,
And cold welle streames, nothing dede,
That swommen full of smale fishes light,
With finnes rede, and scales silver bright.

On every bough the birdes heard I sing,
With voice of angell in hir armonie,
That busied hem hir birdes forth to bring,
The little pretty conies to hir play gan hie,
And further all about I gan espie
The dredeful roe, the buck, the hart, and hind,
Squirrels, and beastes small of gentle kind.

Of instruments of stringes in accorde
Heard I so play a ravishing swetnesse,
That God, that maker is of all and Lorde,
Ne heard never better, as I gesse,
Therewith a wind, unneth it might be lesse,
Made in the leaves grene a noise soft
Accordant to the foules song on loft.

The aire of the place so attempre was,
That never was ther grevance of hot ne cold,
There was eke every holsome spice and gras,
Ne no man may there waxe sicke ne old,
Yet was there more joy o thousand fold,
Than I can tell or ever could or might,
There is ever clere day, and never night.

Under a tree beside a well I sey
Cupide, our lorde, his arrowes forge and file,
And at his feete his bowe already lay,
And well his doughter tempred all the while
The heddes in the well, with her wile
She couched hem after, as they should serve
Some to slee, and some to wound and carve.

Tho was I ware of Pleasaunce anon right,
And of Array, Lust, Beauty, and Curtesie,
And of the Craft, that can and hath the might
To don by force a wight to don folie :
Disfigured was she, I will not lie,
And by himselfe, under an oke I gesse,
Sawe I Delite, that stood with Gentlenesse.

Than saw I Beauty, with a nice attire,
And Youth, full of game and jolitee,
Foole-hardinesse, Flatterie, and Desire,
Messagerie, Mede, and other three,
Hir names shall not here be told for me ;
And upon pillers great of jasper long,
I sawe a temple of brasse yfounded strong.

And about the temple daunced alway
Women inow, of which some there were
Faire of hemself, and some of hem were gay,
In kirtils all disheveled went they there,
That was their office ever, fro yere to yere ;
And on the temple, saw I white and faire,
Of doves sitting many a thousand paire.

And before the temple doore full soberly,
Dame Peace sat, a curtaine in her honde,
And her beside wonder discretly,
Dame Pacience, sitting there I fonde,
With face pale, upon an hill of sonde,
And alther next, within and without,
Behest and Arte, and of her folke a rout.

Within the temple, of sighes hote as fire,
I heard a swough that gan about ren,
Which sighes were engendred with desire,
That made every herte for to bren
Of newe flambe, and well espied I then,
That all the cause of sorowes that they drie
Come of the bitter goddess Jalousie.

The god Priapus saw I as I went
Within the temple, in soverain place stond,
In such array, as whan the asse him shent
With crie by night, and with sceptre in honde ;
Full busilie men gan assay and fonde,
Upon his hedde to set of sondrie hewe,
Garlandes full of freshe floures newe.

And in a privie corner, in disport
Found I Venus, and her porter Richesse,
That was full noble and hautein of her port ;
Darke was that place, but after lightnesse
I sawe a lite, unnethes it might be lesse,
And on a bed of golde she lay to rest,
Till that the hote Sonne gan to west.

Her gilte heeres with a gold threde
Ybound were, untressed as she lay,
And naked from the brest unto the hede,
Men might her see, and sothly for to saie,
The remnaunt, covered well to my paie,
Right with a little kerchefe of Valence,
There was no thicker clothe of defence.

The place gave a thousand savours soote,
And Bacchus god of wine sate her beside,
And Ceres next, that doeth of hunger boote,
And as I said, amiddes lay Cupide,
To whom on knees, the yonge folkes cride,
To be their helpe, but thus I let her lie,
And farther in her temple I gan espie.

That in dispite of Diane the chaste,
Full many a bowe ybroke hing on the wall,
Of maidens, such as gone hir times waste
In her service : and painted over all,
Of many a storie, of which I touch shall
A fewe, as of Calixte, and Athalant,
And many a maid, of which the name I want.

Semyramus, Candace, and Hercules,
Biblis, Dido, Tisbe, and Piramus,
Tristram, Isoude, Paris, and Achilles,
Helaine, Cleopatre, and Troilus,
Sylla, and eke the mother of Romulus,
All these were paynted on that other side,
And all hir love, and in what plite they dide.

Whan I was commen ayen into the place
That I of spake, that was so soote and grene,
Forth walked I tho, my selven to solace,
Tho was I ware, where there sate a quene,
That as of light the sommer Sunne shene
Passeth the sterre, right so over mesure,
She fairer was than any creature.

And in a launde, upon an hill of floures,
Was set this noble goddesse Nature,
Of branches were her halles and her boures
Ywrought, after her craft and her mesure,
Ne there n'as foul that cometh of engendrure,
That there ne were prest in her presence,
To take hir dome and yeve hir audience.

For this was on sainct Valentines day,
Whan every foule cometh to chese hir make,
Of every kind that men thinke may,
And that so huge a noise gan they make,
That earth, sea, and tree, and every lake,
So full was, that unneth there was space
For me to stand, so full was all the place.

And right as Alain, in the Plaint of Kinde,
Deviseth Nature of such araie and face,
In suche aray men might her there finde.
This noble empresse full of all grace,
Bad every foule take hir owne place,
As they were wont alway, fro yere to yere,
On sainct Valentines day, standen there.

That is to say, the foules of ravine
Were highest set, and than the foules smale,
That eaten as that nature would encline,
As worme or thing, of which I tell no tale,
But water foule sat lowest in the dale,
And foules that liveth by seed sat on the grene,
And that so many, that wonder was to sene.

There might men the royall egle find,
That with his sharpe looke perseth the Son,
And other egles of a lower kind,
Of which that clerkes well devisen con;
There was the tyrant with his fethers don,
And grene, I mean the goshauke that doth pine
To birdes, for his outragious ravine.

The gentle faucon, that with his fete distreineth
The kings hand, the hardy sperhauke eke,
The quailes foe, the merlion that peineth
Himself full oft the larke for to seke,
There was the dove, with her eyen meke,
The jelous swan, ayenst his deth that singeth,
The oul eke, that of deth the bode bringeth.

The crane, the geaunt, with his trompes soune,
The thief the chough, and the chattring pie,
The scorning jaye, the eles foe the heroune,
The false lapwing, full of trecherie,
The stare, that the counsaile can bewrie,
The tame ruddocke, and the coward kite,
The cocke, that horiloge is of thorpes lite.

The sparowe Venus' son, and the nightingale
That clepeth forth the fresh leaves new,
The swalowe, murdrer of the bees smale
That maken honie of floures fresh of hew,
The wedded turtell, with his herte true,
The pecocke, with his angel fethers bright,
The fesaunt, scorner of the cocke by night.

The waker gose, the cuckowe ever unkind,
The popingey, full of delicasy,
The drake, stroier of his owne kind,
The storke, wreker of aduoutry,
The hote cormeraunt, ful of glotony,
The ravin and the crowe, with her voice of care,
The throstell olde, and the frostie feldefare.

What should I say? of foules of every kind,
That in this world have fethers and stature,
Men might in that place assembled find,
Before that noble goddess of Nature,
And eche of them did his busie cure,
Benignely to chese, or for to take
By her accorde, his formell or his make.

But to the point: Nature held on her hond,
A formell egle, of shape the gentillest,
That ever she among her workes fond,
The most benigne, and eke the goodliest,
In her was every vertue, at his rest
So farforth, that Nature her selfe had blisse,
To looke on her, and oft her beeke to kisse.

Nature, the vicar of the almightie Lord,
That hote, colde, hevie, light, moist, and drie,
Hath knit, by even number of accord,
In easie voice, began to speake and say,
"Foules, take heed of my sentence I pray,
And for your own case, in furdring of your need,
As fast as I may speak, I will me speed.

"Ye knowe wel, how on Saint Valentines day,
By my statute, and through my governance,
Ye do chese your makes, and after flie away
With hem, as I pricke you with pleasaunce,
But nathelesse, as by rightfull ordinaunce,
May I not let, for all this world to win,
But he that most worthiest is shall begin.

"The tercell egle, as ye know full wele,
The foule royall, above you all in degre,
The wise and worthie, the secret true as stele,
The which I have formed, as ye may see,
In every parte as it best liketh mee,
It nedeth not his shape you to devise,
He shall first chese, and speken in his gise.

"And after him, by order shall ye chese,
After your kind, everiche as you liketh,
And as your hap is, shall ye win or lese,
But which of you that love most entriketh,
God sende him her that sorest for him siketh:"
And therewithall, the tercell gan she call,
And said, "My sonne, the choise is to thee fall.

"But nathelesse, in this condicion
Must be the choice of everiche that is here,
That she agree to his election,
Who so he be, that should been her fere,
This is our usage alway, fro yere to yere,
And who so may at this time have his grace,
In blisfull time he came into this place."

With hed enclined, and with ful humble chere,
This roial tercell spake, and taried nought,
"Unto my soveraine lady, and not my fere,
I chose and chese, with will, herte, and thought,
The formell on your hand, so wel ywrought,
Whose I am all, and ever will her serve,
Doe what her luste, to doe me live or sterve.

"Besechyng her of mercy, and of grace,
As she that is my ladie soveraine,
Or let me die here present in this place,
For certes long may I not live in paine,
For in my herte is corven every vaine,
Having regard onely to my trouth,
My dere herte, have on my wo some routh.

"And if I be found to her untrue,
Disobeisaunt, or wilfull negligent,
Avauntour, or in processe love a newe,
I pray to you this be my judgement,
That with these foules I be all to rent,
That ilke day that she me ever find
To her untrue, or in my gilte unkind.

"And sith that none loveth her so well as I,
Although she never of love me behet,
Than ought she be mine through her mercy,
For other bonde can I none on her knet:
For wele nor wo never shall I let
To serve her, how farre so that she wende,
Say what you list, my tale is at an ende."

Right as the fresh redde rose newe
Against the sommer Sunne coloured is,
Right so for shame all waxen gan the hewe
Of this formell, whan she heard all this,
Neither she answerde well, ne said amis,
So sore abashed was she, till that Nature
Said, "Doughter drede you not, I you assure."

Another tercell egle spake anon,
Of lower kind, and said, "That should not be,
I love her better than ye doe, by saint John,
Or at the least, I love her as well as ye,
And lenger have served her in my degree,
And if she should have loved for long loving,
To me alone had be the guerdoning.

"I dare eke say, if she me finde false,
Unkind jangler, or rebell in any wise,
Or jelous, doe me hang by the halse,
And but I beare me in her servise
As well as my wit can me suffise,
Fro point to point, her honour for to save,
Take she my life, and all the good I have."

The third tercell egle answerde tho,
"Now sirs, ye see the little leaser here,
For every foule crieth out to be ago
Forth with his make, or with his lady dere:
And eke Nature her self ne will not here
For tarying her, not half that I would sey,
And but I speake, I must for sorrow dey.

"Of long service avaunt I me nothing,
But as possible is me to die to day
For wo, as he that hath be languishing
This twenty winter, and wel it happen may,
A man may serve better, and more to pay,
In half a year, although it were no more,
Than some man doth that hath served full yore.

"I ne say not this by me, for I ne can
Do no service that may my lady please,
But I dare say I am her trewest man,
As to my dome, and fainest wolde her please:
At short wordes, till that death me cease,
I will be hers, whether I wake or winke,
And trewe in all that herte may bethinke."

Of al my life, sith that day I was borne,
So gentle plee in love or other thing,
Ne herde never no man me beforne,
Who so that had leiser and conning
For to rehearse their chere, and their speaking;
And from the morrow gan this spech last,
Till downward went the Sunne wonder fast.

The noyse of foules for to be deliverd,
So loude rang, "Have don and let us wend,"
That well weend I, the wood had al to shiverd:
"Come off," they cryd, "alas, ye will us shend,
Whan shal your cursed pleding have an end?
How should a judge either party leve,
For ye or nay, without any preve?"

The goos, the duck, and the cuckowe also,
So cried "Keke, keke, Cuckow, Queke, queke, hie,"
Through mine eares the noise went tho.
The goos said than "Al this n'is worth a flie,
But I can shape hereof a remedie,
And will say my verdite, faire and swithe,
For water foule, whoso be wroth or blithe."

"And I for worm foule," said the fole cuckow,
"For I will of mine own authorite,
For common spede, take on me the charge now,
For to deliver us it is great charite."
"Ye may abide a while, yet perde,"
(Quod the turtel) "if it be your will,
A wight may speak, it were as good be still.

"I am a sede foule, one the unworthiest,
That wote I well, and leest of conning,
But better is that a wights tonge rest,
Than entremete him of such doing
Of which he neither rede can nor sing,
And who so it doth, full foule himself acloyeth,
For office uncommitted oft annoyeth."

Nature, which that alway had an eare
To murmure of the lewdenesse behind,
With facond voice said, "Hold your tongues there,
And I shall soone, I hope, a counsaile find,
You for to deliver, and fro this noyse unbind:
I charge of every flock ye shall one call,
To say the verdite of you foules all."

Assented were to this conclusion,
The birdes all: and foules of ravine
Have chosen first by plaine election,
The tercelet of the faucon to define
All hir sentence, and as him lust to termine,
And to Nature him they did present,
And she accepteth him with glad entent.

The tercelet said than in this manere,
"Full hard it were to preve it by reason,
Who loveth best this gentle formell here,
For everich hath such replicatioun,
That by skils may none be brought adoun,
I cannot see that arguments availe,
Than seemeth it there must be battaile."

"All ready" (quod these eagle tercels tho:)
"Nay sirs," (quod he) "if that I durst it say,
Ye do me wrong, my tale is not ydo:
For sirs, taketh nat a greefe I pray,
It may not be as ye would, in this way,
Ours is the voice, that have the charge in hand,
And to the judges dome ye must stand.

"And, therefore, peace I say, as to my wit,
Me would thinke, how that the worthiest
Of knighthood, and lengest had used it,
Most of estate, of blood the gentillest,
Were fitting for her, if that her lest,
And of these three, she wote her selfe I trow
Which that he be, for it is light to know."

The water foules have their heads laid
Togider, and of short avisement,
Whan everiche had this verdite said,
They said soothly all by one assent,
How that the goos, with the facond gent,
That so desireth to pronounce our nede,
Shal tel her tale, and praid to God her spede.

And for these water foules tho began
The goose to speake, and in her cakeling
She said, "Peace now, take keep every man,
And herken which a reason I shall forth bring.
My witte is sharpe, I love no tarrying,
I say, I rede him, tho he were my brother,
But she will love him, let him love another."

"Lo, here a parfite reason of a goose"
(Quod the sperhauke) "never mote she the,
Lo, such a thing it is to have a tongue lose:
Now parde foole, yet were it better for the
Have held thy peace than shewd thy nicete;
It lieth nat in his wit, nor in his will,
But sooth is said, a fole cannot be still."

The laughter arose of gentill foules all,
And right anone the seed foules chosen had
The turtle true, and gan her to hem call,
And prayed her to say the sooth sad
Of this matter, and asked what she rad?
And she answerd, that plainly her entent
She would shew, and soothly what she ment.

"Nay, God forbede a lover should chaunge,"
The turtle said (and wex for shame all red)
"Though that his lady evermore be straunge,
Yet let him serve her alway, till he be deed,
Forsooth, I praise not the gooses reed,
For tho she died, I would none other make,
I will be hers, till that the death me take."

"Well ybourded" (quod the duck) "by my hat,
That men should love alway causelesse,
Who can a reason find, or wit in that?
Dauncetb he merry that is mirthlesse?
Who should recke of that is retchlesse?
Ye queke yet," quod the duck, "full well and fair,
There be mo sterres in the skie than a pair."

"Now fie churle," quod the gentle tercelet,
"Out of the dunghill came that word aright,
Thou canst not see which thing is well beset,
Thou farest by love as owles do by light,
The day hem blindeth, full well they see by night,
Thy kind is of so low wretchedness,
That what love is thou canst not see nor gess."

Tho gan the cuckow put him forth in preace,
For foule that eateth worme, and said blive:
"So I," quod he, "may have my make in peace,
I retch not how long that ye strive,
Let ech of hem be soleine all hir live,
This is my rede, sens they may nat accord,
This short lesson needeth not record."

"Ye, have the glutton filde his paunch
Than are we well," said the emerlon,
"Thou murdrer of the heysugge on the braunch
That brought thee forth, thou ruful glutton,
Live thou solein, wormes corruption,
For no force is of lack of thy nature,
Go, leude be thou while the world may dure."

"Now peace," quod Nature, "I commaunde here,
For I have heard all your opinion,
And in effect yet be we never the nere,
But finally, this is my conclusion,
That she her selfe shall have her election
Of whom her list, who so be wrothe or blithe,
Him that she cheseth, he shall her have as swithe.

"For sith it may not here discussed be
Who loveth her best, as said the tercelet,
Than woll I done this favour to her, that she
Shall have right him on whom her herte is set,
And he her, that his herte hath on her knet;
This judge I Nature, for I may not lie
To none estate, I have none other eye.

"But as for counsaile for to chuse a make,
If I were reason, than would I
Counsaile you the royal tercell take,
As said the tercelet full skilfully,
As for the gentillest and most worthy,
Which I have wroght so wel to my plesaunce
That to you it ought ben a suffisaunce."

With dredeful voice that formel her answerd,
"My rightful lady, goddess of Nature,
Sooth is, that I am ever under your yerd,
As is everich other creature,
And must be yours while my life may dure,
And therefore graunt me my first boone,
And mine entent you woll I say right soone."

"I graunt it you," quod she, and right anone
This formel eagle spake in this degree:
"Almighty quene, unto this year be done
I aske respite for to avisen mee,
And after that to have my choice all free,
This all and some that I would speak and sey,
Ye get no more, although you do me dey.

"I woll not serven Venus ne Cupide,
Forsooth as yet, by no maner way."
"Now sens it may none other ways betide"
(Quod Nature) "here is no more to say.
Than would I that these foules were away,
Ech with his make, for tarying lenger here,"
And said hem thus, as ye shall after here.

"To you speke I, ye tercelets," (quod Nature)
"Beth of good herte, and serveth all three,
A yeare is not so long to endure,
And ech of you paine him in his degree,
For to do well, for God wote quit is she
Fro you this year, what after so befall,
This entremes is dressed for you all."

And whan this werk brought was to an end,
To every foule Nature yave his make,
By even accord, and on hir way they wend,
And Lord the blisse and joy that they make,
For ech of hem gan other in his wings take,
And with hir neckes ech gan other winde,
Thanking alway the noble goddess of kinde.

But first were chosen foules for to sing,
As yere by yere was alway hir usaunce,
To sing a roundel at hir departing,
To do Nature honour and pleasaunce;
The note I trow maked was in Fraunce,
The words were such as ye may here find,
The next verse, as I now have in mind.

Qui bien ayme tard oublye.

"Now welcome summer, with thy sunnes soft,
That hast this winter weathers overshake,
Saint Valentine, thou art full high on loft,
Which drivest away the long nights blake;
Thus singen smale foules for thy sake,
Well have they cause for to gladen oft,
Sens each of hem recovered hath his make,
Full blisful may they sing whan they awake."

And with the shouting whan hir song was do,
That the foules made at hir flight away,
I woke, and other bookes took me to
To rede upon and yet I rede alway,
I hope ywis to rede so some day,
That I shall mete something for to fare
The bet, and thus to rede I nill not spare.

EXPLICIT.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE BLACK KNIGHT.

THE HEAUIE COMPLAINT OF A KNIGHT, FOR THAT HE CANNOT WIN HIS LADIES GRACE.

v. 1—98

In May, whan Flora the fresh lusty quene,
The soile hath cladde in grene, red, and whight,
And Phebus gan to shede his stremes shene
Amidde the Bulle, with all the beames bright,
And Lucifer to chace away the night,
Ayen the morow our orizont hath take,
To bid all lovers out of hir slepe awake.

And hertes heavy for to recomfort
From drerihed of heavy night sorowe,
Nature bad hem rise and hem disport
Ayen the goodly glad grey morowe,
And Hope also, with saint Johan to borowe,
Bad, in dispite of daunger and dispaire,
For to take the holsome lusty aire.

And with a sigh, I gan for to abreide
Out of my slumber, and sodainly up starte,
As he (alas) that nigh for sorow deide,
My sicknesse sate aye so nie my herte;
But for to finde succour of my smart,
Or at the least some release of my peine,
That me so sore halte in every veine.

I rose anone, and thought I woulde gone
Into the woode, to heare the birdes sing,
Whan that the misty vapour was agone,
And cleare and faire was the morning,
The dewe also like silver in shining
Upon the leaves, as any baume swete,
Till firy Titan with his persant hete

Had dried up the lusty licour new
Upon the herbes in the grene mede,
And that the floures of many divers hew,
Upon hir stalkes gon for to sprede,
And for to splay out hir leves in brede
Againe the Sunne, gold burned in his spere,
That doune to hem cast his beames clere.

And by a river forth I gan costay,
Of water clere as birell or cristall,
Till at the last, I found a little way
Toward a parke, enclosed with a wall
In compace rounde, and by a gate small
Who so that would might freely gone
Into this parke, walled with grene stone.

And in I went to heare the birdes song,
Which on the braunches, both in plaine and vale,
So loud sang that all the wood rong,
Like as it should shiver in peeces smale
And, as me thought, that the nightingale
With so great might her voice gan out wrest,
Right as her herte for love would brest.

The soile was plaine, smoth, and wonder soft,
All oversprad with tapettes that Nature
Had made her selfe: covered eke aloft
With bowes greene the floures for to cure,
That in hir beauty they may long endure
From all assaut of Phebus fervent fere,
Which in his sphere so hote shone and clere.

The aire attempre, and the smothe wind
Of Zepherus, among the blosomes white,
So holsome was, and so nourishing by kind,
That smale buddes and round blosomes lite
In maner gan of hir brethe delite,
To yeve us hope there fruite shall take
Ayenst autumne redy for to shake.

I saw the Daphene closed under rinde,
Greene laurer, and the holsome pine,
The mirre also that wepeth ever of kinde,
The cedres hie, upright as a line,
The filbert eke, that lowe doth encline
Her bowes grene to the earth adoun,
Unto her knight called Demophoun.

There sawe I eke the freshe hauthorne
In white motley, that so swote doth smell,
Ashe, firre, and oke, with many a yong acorn,
And many a tree mo than I can tell,
And me beforne I sawe a little well,
That had his course, as I gan beholde,
Under an hill, with quicke stremes colde.

The gravel gold, the water pure as glasse,
The bankes round the well environyng,
And soft as velvet the yonge grasse
That thereupon lustely came springyng,
The sute of trees about compassyng,
Hir shadow cast, closing the well round,
And all the herbes growing on the ground.

The water holsome was, and so vertuous,
Through might of herbes growing beside,
Not like the welle where as Narcissus
Yslaine was, through vengeaunce of Cupide,
Where so covertly he did hide
The graine of death upon eche brinke,
That death mote folow who that ever drinke.

Ne like the pitte of the Pegace,
Under Pernaso, where poets slept,
Nor like the welle of pure chastite,
Which that Diane with her nimphes kept
Whan she naked into the water lepte,
That slowe Acteon with her hondes fell,
Onely for he came so nigh the well.

But this welle that I here of rehearse,
So holsome was, that it would aswage
Bollen hertes, and the venim pearce
Of pensifehed with all the cruell rage,
And overmore refresh the viage
Of hem that were in any weriuesse
Of great labour, or fallen in distresse.

And I that had through daunger and disdain
So drye a thurst, thought I would assay
To taste a draught of this welle or twain,
My bitter languor if it might alay,
And on the banke anone doune I lay,
And with mine hed unto the welle I raught,
And of the water dranke I a good draught.

Wherof me thought I was refreshed wele
Of the brennyng that sate so nigh my herte,
That, verily, anone I gan to fele
An huge parte released of my smart,
And therewithall, anone, up I start,
And thought I would walke and see more,
Forth in the parke, and in the holtes hore.

And through a laund as I yede apace,
And gan about fast to behold,
I found anone a delectable place,
That was beset with trees young and old,
Whose names here for me shall not be told,
Amidde of which stood an herber greene,
That benched was, with colours new and clene.

This herber was full of floures gende,
Into the which, as I beholde gan,
Betwixt an hulfeere and a woodbende,
As I was ware, I saw where lay a man
In blacke, and white colour pale and wan,
And wonder deadly also of his hewe,
Of hurtes grene and fresh woundes new.

And overmore, distrayned with sicknesse,
Beside all this, he was full grevously,
For upon him he had an hote accesse,
That day by day him shooke full pitously,
So that for constrayning of his malady
And hertely wo, thus lying alone,
It was a death for to hear him grone.

Whereof astonied, my fote I gan withdraw,
Greatly wondring what it might be,
That he so lay, and had no felaw,
Ne that I could no wight with him see,
Whereof I had routhe and eke pite,
And gan anone, so softly as I coude,
Among the bushes prively me to shroude.

I that I might in any wise aspy
What was the cause of his deedly wo,
Or why that he so pitously gan cry
On his fortune, and on ure also,
With all my might I laid an eare to,
Every word to marke what he said,
Out of his swough amonge as he abraid.

But first, if I should make mencion
Of his person, and plainely him discrive,
He was in sothe, without excepcion,
To speake of manhood, one the best on live;
There may no man ayen trouth strive,
For of his tyme, and of his age also,
He proved was, there men shuld have ado,

For one of the best therto of brede and length,
So well ymade by good proporcion,
If he had be in his deliver strength;
But thought and sicknesse were occasion
That he thus lay in lamentacion,
Gruffe on the ground, in place desolate,
Sole by himselfe, awhaped and amate.

And for me seemeth that it is fitting
His wordes all to put in remembraunce,
To me, that heard all his complaining,
And all the ground of his wofull chaunce,
If there withall I may you do pleasaunce,
I woll to you, so as I can, anone,
Lyke as he sayd, rehearce everichone.

But who shall helpe me now to complain,
Or who shall now my stile gie or lede?
O Niobe, let now thy teares rain
In to my penne! and helpe eke in nede,
Thou, wofull Myrre! that felest my herte blede
Of pitous wo, and mine hand eke quake,
Whan that I write, for this mannes sake.

For unto wo accordeth complayning,
And dolefull chere unto heavinesse,
To sorow also, sighing and weping,
And pitous mourning unto drerinesse,
And who that shall write of distresse,
In party needeth to know feelingly
Cause and roote of all soch malady.

But I alas, that am of witte but dull,
And have no knowing of such matere,
For to discrive, and write at the full
The wofull complaint, which that ye shall here,
But even like as doth a skrivenere,
That can no more what that he shall write,
But as his maister beside doth endite;

Right so fare I, that of no sentement
Say right naught in conclusion,
But as I herde whan I was present,
This man complaine with a pitous soun,
For, even like, without addicioun,
Or disencrease, eyther more or lesse,
For to rehearse anone I woll me dresse.

And if that any now be in this place,
That fele in love brenning of fervence,
Or hindred were to his ladies grace
With false tonges, that with pestilence
Slee trewe men that never did offence
In worde nor deed, ne in hir entent,
If any such be here now present,

Let him of routh lay to audience,
With doleful chere, and sobre countenaunce,
To here this man, by full hye sentence,
His mortall wo, and his perturbaunce
Complayning, now lying in a traunce,
With lookes upcast and rufull chere,
Theffect of which was as ye shall here.

"The thought oppressed with inward sighs sore,
The painful life, the body languishing,
The woful ghost, the herte rent and tore,
The pitous chere pale in complayning,
The deedly face, like ashes in shining,
The salte teares that from mine eyen fall,
Percel declare ground of my paynes all.

herte is ground to blede in hevinesse,
ght receit of wo and of complaint,
t is chest of dole and drerinesse,
eke so feeble and so faint,
e and colde mine accesse is so maint,
I chiver for defaut of heat,
as glede now sodainly I sweat.

te as fire, now colde as ashes deed,
for cold, now cold for heat againe,
l as yse, now as coles reed,
e I brenne, and thus betwixe twaine,
am, and all forecast in paine,
ny heate plainly as I fele,
ous colde is cause every dele.

the colde of inward hie disdain,
dispite, and colde of cruell hate,
e colde that ever doth his besie pain
routh to fight and debate,
e colde that the fire abate
meaning, alas, the harde while,
he colde that woll me begile.

er the better that in trouth I ment
my might faithfully to serve,
rte and all to be diligent,
thanke, alas, I can deserve:
my trouth danger doth me sterve,
that should my death of mercy let,
de dispite new his swerde to whet

t me, and his arowes to file
vengeaunce of wilfull cruelte;
ges false, through hir sleightly wile,
ne a werre that will not stinted be,
se Envie, Wrath and Enmite,
nspired against all right and law,
alice, that Trouth shall be slaw.

alebouche gan first the tale tell,
nder Trouth of indignacion,
se-reporte so loude range the bell
sbeleefe and False-suspection
outh brought to his dampnacion,
alas, wrongfully he dieth,
senesse now his place occupieth.

ntred is in to Trouthes londe,
h thereof the full possession.
all God, that first the trouth fonde,
y thou suffre soch oppression,
lsheed should have jurisdiction
thes right to slee him giltles?
aunchise he may not live in pees;

accused, and of his fone forjudged,
answere, while he was absent,
ned was, and may not be excused,
elte sate in judgement
nesse without advisement,
de Disdaine do execute anone,
cement in presence of his fone.

ney may none admitted been
se Trouth, ne a worde to speke,
or othe the judge list not seen,
no game, but he will be wreke:
of trouth, to thee I call and clepe!
y thou see thus in thy presence,
mercy murdred innocence!

"Now God, that art of trouth soveraine,
And seest how I lie for trouth bound,
So sore knit in loves firie chaine,
Even at the death through girte with many a wound,
That likely are never for to sound,
And for my trouth am dampned to the death,
And not abide, but draw along the breath:

"Consider and see in thine eternal right,
How that mine herte professed whilom was,
For to be trewe with all my full might,
Onely to one the which now, alas,
Of volunte, without any trespas,
My accusours hath taken unto grace,
And cherisheth hem my death to purchace.

"What meaneth this! what is this wonder ure
Of purveyaunce if I shall it call,
Of god of love, that false hem so assure,
And trewe, alas, downe of the whele ben fall,
And yet, in sothe, this is the worst of all,
That Falshed wrongfully of Troth hath the name,
And Trouth ayenward of Falshed beareth the blame.

"This blind chaunce, this stormy aventure,
In love hath most his experience,
For who that doth with trouth most his cure,
Shall for his mede finde most offence,
That serveth love with all his diligence:
For who can faine under lowlyhede,
Ne fayleth not to finde grace and spede.

"For I loved one, full long sith agone,
With all mine herte, body, and full might,
And to be deed my herte can not gone
From his heste, but hold that he hath hight,
Though I be banished out of her sight,
And by her mouth dampned that I shall dey,
Unto my hest yet I will ever obey.

"For ever sith that the world began,
Who so liste looke, and in story rede,
He shall aye find that the trewe man
Was put abacke, whereas the falshede
Yfurthered was: for Love taketh none hede
To slee the trew, and hath of hem no charge,
Where as the false goeth frely at hir large.

"I take record of Palamides,
The trewe man, the noble worthy knight,
That ever loved, and of his paine no relees,
Notwithstanding his manhood and his might,
Love unto him did full great unright,
For aye the bet he did in chevalrie,
The more he was hindred by envie.

"And aye the better he did in every place,
Through his knighthood and busie payne,
The ferder was he from his ladies grace,
For to her mercy might he never attayne,
And to his death he coud it not refrayne
For no daungere, but aye obey and serve,
As he best coude, plainly till he sterve.

"What was the fine also of Hercules,
For all his conquest and his worthinesse,
That was of strength alone peerles,
For like as bookes of him list expresse,
He set pillers through his hie prowesse,
Away at Gades, for to signifie,
That no man might him passe in chevalrie:

"The which pillers ferre beyond Inde,
Be set of gold for a remembraunce:
And for all that was he set behinde,
With hem that love list feebly avaunce,
For him set last upon a daunce
Against whom helpe may no strife,
For all his trouth he lost his life.

"Phebus also, for his pleasaunt light,
Whan that he went here in earth lowe,
Unto the herte with Venus sight
Ywounded was through Cupides bowe,
And yet his lady list him not to knowe,
Though for her love his herte did blede,
She let him go, and toke of him no hede.

"What shall I say of yonge Piramus?
Of trewe Tristram, for all his hie renowne,
Of Achilles, or of Antonius,
Of Arcite, or of him Palemoune,
What was the end of hir passioune,
But after sorow death, and then hir grave?
Lo, here the guerdon that these lovers have!

"But false Jason with his doublenesse,
That was untrewe at Colkos to Medee,
And Theseus, roote of unkindnesse,
And with these two eke the false Enee.
Lo, thus the false aye in one degree,
Had in love hir lust and all hir will,
And, save falshood, there was none other skill.

"Of Thebes eke the false Arcite,
And Demophon eke for his slouth,
They had hir lust and all that might delite,
For all hir falshood and great untrouth:
Thus ever Love, alas, and that is routh,
His false lieges forthereth what he may,
And sleeth the trewe ungoodly, day by day.

"For trewe Adon was slaine with the bore,
Amidde the forest in the grene shade,
For Venus love he felt all the sore,
But Vulcanus with her no mercy made,
The foule chorle had many nights glade,
Where Mars her knight and her man,
To find mercy comfort none he can.

"Also the yonge fresh Ipomedes,
So lustly free as of his corage,
That for to serve with all his herte he ches
Athalant, so faire of her visage,
But Love, alas, quite him so his wage
With cruell daunger plainly at the last,
That with the death guerdonlesse he past.

"Lo, here the fine of Loves service,
Lo, how that Love can his servaunts quite,
Lo, how he can his faithfull men dispise,
To slee the trewe men, and false to respite!
Lo, how he doth the swerde of sorow bite
In hertes, soch as most his lust obey,
To save the false and do the trewe dey.

"For faith nor othe, worde ne assuraunce,
Trewe meaning, awaite, or businesse,
Still porte, ne faithfull attendaunce,
Manhood ne might in armes worthinesse,
Pursute of worship nor hie prowesse,
In straunge land riding ne travaile,
Full litell or nought in love doth availe.

"Perill of death, nor in see ne land,
Hunger ne thrust, sorow ne sicknesse,
Ne great emprises for to take in hand,
Sheding of blood, ne manfull hardinesse,
Ne oft wounding at sautes by distresse,
Nor in parting of life nor death also,
All is for nought, Love taketh no heed thereto.

"But lesings with hir flatterie,
Through hir falshede, and with hir doublenesse,
With tales new, and many fained lie,
By false semblaunt, and counterfeit humblesse,
Under colour depaint with stedfastnesse,
With fraud covered under a pitous face,
Accept be now rathest unto grace:

"And can himselfe now best magnifie
With fained port and presumption,
They haunce hir cause with false surquedrie,
Under meaning of double entention,
To thinke one in hir opinion,
And say another, to set himselfe aloft,
And hinder trouth, as it is seene full oft.

"The which thing I buy now all too deare,
Thanked be Venus and the god Cupide,
As it is seene by mine oppressed cheare,
And by his arrowes that sticken in my side,
That save death I nothing abide,
Fro day to day, alas, the hard while,
Whan ever his dart that him list to file,

"My wofull herte for to rive atwo,
For faut of mercy and lacke of pite
Of her that causeth all my paine and wo,
And list not ones of grace for to see
Unto my trouth through her cruelte;
And most of all I me complaine,
That she hath joy to laugh at my paine;

"And wilfully hath my death sworne,
All guiltlesse, and wote no cause why,
Save for the trouth that I had aforne
To her alone to serve faithfully.
O god of love, unto thee I cry,
And to thy blind double deite,
Of this great wrong I complaine me!

"And unto thy stormy wilfull variaunce,
Ymeint with change and great unstablenesse,
Now up, now doun, so renning is thy chance,
That thee to trust may be no sikernesse,
I wite it nothing but thy doublenesse,
And who that is an archer, and is blend,
Marketh nothing, but shooteth by wend.

"And for that he hath no discretion,
Without advise he let his arrow go,
For lacke of sight, and also of reason,
In his shooting it happeth ofte so,
To hurt his friend rather than his fo,
So doth this god with his sharpe flone,
The trew sleeth, and letteth the false gone.

"And of his wounding this is the worst of all,
Whan he hurt doeth to so cruell wretch,
And maketh the sicke for to cry and call
Unto his foe for to be his leche,
And hard it is for a man to seche
Upon the point of death in jeoperdie,
Unto his foe to find a remedie.

"Thus fareth it now even by me,
That to my foe that gave my herte a wound,
Mote aske grace, mercy, and pite,
And namely there where none may be found,
For now my sore my leche will confound,
And god of kind so hath set mine ure,
My lives foe to have my wound in cure.

"Alas the while, now that I was borne,
Or that I ever saw the bright Sonne!
For now I see that full long aforne,
Or I was borne, my desteny was sponne
By Parcas sisterne, to slee me if they conne,
For they my death shopen or my shert,
Only for trouth, I may it not astert.

"The mighty goddesse, also, of Nature,
That under God hath the governaunce
Of worldly things committed to her cure,
Disposed have through her wise purveiance,
To give my lady so much suffisaunce
Of all vertues, and therewithall purvide
To murder Trouth, hath take Danger to gide.

"For bounte, beaute, shape, and seemelihede,
Prudence, wit, passingly fairenesse,
Benigne port, glad chere, with lowlihede,
Of womanhede right plenteous largenesse,
Nature did in her fully empresse,
Whan she her wrought, and alderlast Disdain,
To hinder Trouth, she made her chamberlain.

"Whan Mistrust also, and False-suspection,
With Misbeleve she made for to be
Cheefe of counsaile to this conclusion,
For to exile Trouth, and eke Pite,
Out of her court to make Mercy flee,
So that dispite now holdeth forth her reigne,
Through hasty bileve of tales that men feigne.

"And thus I am for my trouth, alas,
Murdred and slain with words sharp and kene,
Guiltlesse, God wote, of all trespas,
And lie and blede upon this cold grene,
Now mercy swete, mercy my lives quene,
And to your grace of mercy yet I prey,
In your service that your man may dey.

"But if so be that I shall die algate,
And that I shall none other mercy have,
Yet of my death let this been the date,
That by your wil I was broght to my grave,
Or hastely, if that you list me save,
My sharpe wounds that ake so and blede,
Of mercy charme, and also of womanhede.

"For other charme, plainly, is there none,
But only mercy to helpe in this case,
For though my wounds bleed ever in one,
My life, my death, standeth in your grace,
And though my guilt be nothing, alas,
I aske mercy in all my best entent,
Ready to die, if that ye assent.

"For there against shall I never strive
In word ne werke, plainely I ne may,
For lever I have than to be alive,
To die soothly, and it be to her pay,
Ye, though it be this same day,
Or whan that ever her list to devise,
Suffiseth me to die in your servise.

"And God, that knowest the thought of every wight,
Right as it is, in every thing thou maist see,
Yet ere I die, with all my full might,
Lowly I pray to graunt unto mee,
That ye goodly, faire, fresh, and free,
Which onely sle me for default of routh,
Or that I die, ye may know my trouth.

"For that in sooth sufficeth me,
And she it know in every circumstaunce,
And after I am well paid that she,
If that her list, of death to do vengeaunce
Unto me, that am under her ligeaunce,
It sit me not her doome to disobey,
But at her lust wilfully to dey.

"Without grutching or rebellion
In will or word, holy I assent,
Or any manner contradiction,
Fully to be at her commaundement,
And, if I die, in my testament
My herte I send, and my spirit also,
What so ever she list with hem to do.

"And alderlast, to her womanhede,
And to her mercy me I recommaund,
That lie now here betwixe hope and drede,
Abiding plainly what she list commaund,
For utterly this n'is no demaund
Welcome to me while me lasteth breath,
Right at her choice, where it be life or death.

"In this matter more what might I saine,
Sith in her hand, and in her will is all,
But life and death, my joy, and all my paine,
And finally my best hold I shall,
Till my spirit by desteny fatall,
Whan that her list fro my body wend,
Have here my trouth, and thus I make an end."

And with that word he gan sigh as sore,
Like as his herte rive would atwaine,
And held his peace, and spake no word more,
But for to see his wo and mortal paine,
The teares gonne fro mine eyen raine
Full pitously, for very inward routh,
That I him saw so long wishing for trouth.

And all this while my selfe I kepte close
Among the bowes, and my selfe gonne hide,
Till at the last the wofull man arose,
And to a lodge went there beside,
Where all the May his custome was t'abide,
Sole to complaine of his paines kene,
From yere to yere, under the bowes grene;

And for bicause that it drew to the night,
And that the Sunne his arke diurnal
Ypassed was, so that his persaunt light,
His bright beams and his streams all
Were in the waves of the water fall,
Under the bordure of our occian,
His chaire of gold, his course so swiftly ran:

And while the twilight and the rowes rede
Of Phebus light were deaurate a lite,
A penne I tooke, and gan me fast spede
The wofull plaint of this man to write,
Word by word, as he did endite,
Like as I heard, and coud hem tho report,
I have here set, your hertes to disport.

If ought be misse, lay the wite on me,
For I am worthy for to beare the blame,
If any thing misse reported be,
To make this ditie for to seeme lame,
Through mine unconning, but for to sain the same,
Like as this manne his complaint did expresse,
I aske mercy and forgivenesse.

And as I wrote, me thought I saw aferre,
Ferre in the west lustely appere
Esperus the goodly bright sterre,
So glad, so faire, so persaunt eke of chere,
I mean Venus with her beames clere,
That heavy hertes only to releve,
Is wont of custome for to shew at eve.

And I as fast fell adown on my knee,
And even thus to her gan I to prey:
"O lady Venus, so faire upon to see,
Let not this man for his trouth dey!
For that joy thou haddest whan thou ley
With Mars thy knight, whan Vulcanus fond,
And with a chaine unvisible you bond

"Togider both tway in the same while,
That all the court above celestiall,
At your shame gan laugh and smile:
Ah, faire lady, willy fond at all,
Comfort to carefull, O goddesse immortall,
Be helping now, and do thy diligence
To let the streames of thine influence

"Descend downe in forthering of the trouth,
Namely of hem that lie in sorrow bound,
Shew now thou might, and on hir wo have routh,
Ere false daunger slee hem and confound:
And specially let thy might be found
For so to cover, what so that thou may,
The true man that in the herber lay;

"And all true forther for his sake,
O glad sterre, O lady Venus mine,
And cause his lady him to grace take,
Her herte of stele to mercy so encline,
Ere that thy bemes go up to decline,
And ere that thou now go fro us adoun,
For that love thou haddest to Adoun."

And whan she was gone to her rest,
I rose anone, and home to bed went,
Forweary, me thought it for the best,
Praying thus in all my best entent,
That all trew, that be with daunger shent,
With mercy may in release of hir paine,
Recured be, ere May come efte againe.

And for that I ne may no lenger wake,
Farewell ye lovers all that be trew,
Praying to God, and thus my leve I take,
That ere the Sunne to morrow be risen new,
And ere he have ayen rosen hew,
That each of you may have such a grace,
His owne lady in armes to embrace.

I meane thus, in all honesty,
Without more ye may togider speake
What so ye list at good liberty,
That each may to other hir herte breke,
On jelousies onely to be wreke,
That hath so long of his mallice and envy
Werred trouth with his tiranny.

LENVOYE.

Princesse, pleaseth it to your benignitie
This little ditie to have in mind,
Of womanhede also for to see,
Your man may your mercy find,
And pity eke, that long hath be behind,
Let him againe be provoked to grace,
For by my trouth it is against kind
False daunger to occupy his place.

Go little quaire unto my lives queene
And my very hertes soveraine,
And be right glad for she shall thee seene,
Such is thy grace, but I alas, in paine
Am left behind, and n'ot to whom to plaine,
For mercy, ruth, grace, and eke pite
Exiled be, that I may not attaine
Recure to find of mine adversite.

EXPLICIT.

CHAUCER'S A B. C

CALLED LA PRIERE DE NOSTRE DAME.

Chaucer's A. B. C. called La Priere de Nostre Dame: made, as some say, at the request of Blanch, Duchess of Lancaster, as a praier for her private use, being a woman in her religion very devout.

v. 1—80

A.

ALMIGHTY and all merciable queene,
To whom all this world fleeth for succour
To have release of sinne, of sorrow, of tene,
Glorious Virgine of all flouris flour!
To thee I flee, confounded in errour,
Helpe and releeve, almighty debonaire!
Have mercy of mine perillous langour!
Venquist me hath my cruell adversaire.

B.

Bounty so fixe hath in my herte his tent,
That well I wote thou will my succour be,
Thou canst not warn that with good entent,
Axeth thine helpe, thine herte is aye so free:
Thou art largesse of plaine felicite,
Haven and refute of quiete and of rest;
Lo, how that thevis seven chasen me!
Helpe, lady bright, or that mine ship to brest!

C.

Comfort is none, but in you, lady dere,
For lo, mine sinne and mine confusioun,
Which ought not in thine presence for to apere,
Han taken on me a greevous actioun,
Of veray right and disperatioun,
And, as by right, they mighten well sustene
That I were worthy mine damnatioun,
Nere mercy of you, blisfull quene!

D.

Dout is there none, queen of misericord,
That thou n'art cause of grace and mercy here,
God vouchedsafe through thee with us to accord:
For certis, Christ is blisful modir dere,
Were now the bow bent in swiche manere,
As it was first of justice and of ire,
The rightfull God would of no mercy here:
But through thee han we grace as we desire.

E.

Ever hath mine hope of refute in thee be:
For here beforne full oft, in many a wise,
Unto mercy hast thou received me,
But mercy, lady, at the great assise,
Whan we shall come before the high justise,
So little frute shall than in me ben found,
That but thou or that day correct me,
Of very right mine werk will me confound.

F.

Flying, I flee for succour to thine tent,
Me for to hide fro tempest full of drede,
Beseeking you, that ye you not absent,
Though I be wicke: O help yet at this nede!
All have I been a beast in wit and dede,
Yet lady, thou mee close in with thine own grace!
Thine enemy and mine, lady take hede,
Unto mine death in point is me to chase.

G.

Gracious maid and modir, which that never
Were bitter nor in earth nor in see,
But full of sweetnesse and of mercy ever,
Help, that mine fader be not wroth with me!
Speake thou, for I ne dare him not see,
So have I done in earth, alas the while,
That certes but if thou mine succour be,
To sinke eterne he will mine ghost exile.

H.

He vouchedesafe, tell him, as was his will,
Become a man as for our alliaunce,
And with his blood he wrote that blisfull bill
Upon the crosse, as generall acquitaunce
To every penitent in full criaunce:
And, therefore, lady bright, thou for us prey,
Than shalt thou stent all his greevaunce,
And maken our foe to failen of his prey.

I.

I wote well thou wilt been our succour,
Thou art so full of bounty in certaine,
For whan a soule falleth in errour,
Thine pity goeth, and haleth him againe,
Than maketh thou his peace with his soverain,
And bringest him out of the crooked strete:
Who so thee loveth shall not love in vaine,
That shall he find, as he the life shall lete.

K.

Kalenderis enlumined been they,
That in this world been lighted with thine name,
And who so goeth with thee the right wey,
Him that not drede in soule to been lame.
Now, queen of comfort, sith thou art the same
To whom I seech for my medicine,
Let not mine fo no more mine wound entame,
Mine hele into thine hond all I resine.

L.

Lady, thine sorrow can I not portrey
Under that crosse, ne his grevous pennaunce:
But for your bothis peine, I you prey,
Let not our alder fo make his bostaunce,
That he hath in his lestis with mischaunce,
Convict that ye both han bought so dere:
As I said erst, thou ground of substaunce,
Continue on us thine pitous eyen clere!

M.

Moyses that saw the bosh of flambis rede
Brenning, of which than never a sticke brend,
Was sign of thine unwemmed maidenhede,
Thou art the bosh, on which there can descend
The Holyghost, which that Moyses weend
Had been on fire: and this was in figure.
Now lady, from the fire us defend,
Which that in Hell eternally shall dure!

N.

Noble princesse, that never haddest pere,
Certes if any comfort in us bee,
That commeth of thee, Christis moder dere,
We han none other melody ne glee,
Us to rejoyce in our adversite,
Ne advocat none, that will and dare so prey
For us, and that for as little hire as ye,
That helpen for an Avemary or twey.

O.

O very light of eyen tho been blind,
O very lust of labour and distresse,
O treasorere of bounty to mankind,
The whom God chese to moder for humblesse,
From his ancelle he made thee maistresse
Of Heaven and Earth, our bill up to bede,
This world awaiteth ever on thine goodnes,
For thou ne failedest never wight at nede.

P.

Purpose I have, sometime, for to enquere
Wherefore and why the Holyghost thee sought,
Whan Gabrielis voice come to thine ere;
He not to werre us swich a wonder wrought,
But for to save us, that sithen bought:
Than needeth us no weapon us to save,
But onely there we did not as us ought,
Do penitence, and mercy aske and have.

Q.

Queen of comfort, right whan I me bethink,
That I agilt have both him and thee,
And that mine soule is worthy for to sinke,
Alas, I caitife, wheder shall I flee?
Who shall unto thine sonne mine mean be?
Who, but thine selfe, that art of pity well?
Thou hast more routh on our adversitie,
Than in this world might any tongue tell.

R.

Redresse me moder, and eke me chastise,
For certainly my faders chastising
Ne dare I not abiden in no wise,
So hideous is his full reckening;
Moder of whom our joy gan to spring,
Be ye mine judge, and eke my soules leech!
For ever in you is pity abounding,
To each that of pity will you beseech.

S.

Sooth is, he ne graunteth no pity
Without thee: for God of his goodnesse
Forgiveth none, but it like unto thee:
He hath thee made vicaire and maistresse
Of all this world, and eke governeresse
Of Heaven: and represseth his justice
After thine will; and, therefore, in witnesse
He hath thee crowned in so royal wise.

T.

Temple devout, ther God chese his wonning,
For which these misbeleeved deprived been,
To you mine soule penitent I bring,
Receive me, for I can no ferther fleen.
With thornis venemous, Heaven queen,
For which the erth accursed was ful sore,
I am so wounded, as ye may well seene,
That I am lost almost, it smert so sore.

V.

Virgine, that art so noble of apparaile,
That leadest us into the high toure
Of Paradise, thou me wish and counsaile,
How I may have thy grace and thy succour!
All have I been in filth and in errour:
Lady, on that countrey thou me adjourne,
That cleaped is thine bench of fresh flour,
There as that mercy ever shall sojourne.

X.

Xen thine sonne, that in this world alight
Upon a crosse to suffer his passioun,
And suffred eke that Longeus his hart pight,
And made his herte blood renne adoun,
And all this was for my salvatioun:
And I to him am fals and eke unkind,
And yet he will not mine dampnatioun:
This thanke I you, succour of all mankind!

Y.

Ysaac was figure of his death certaine,
That so ferre forth his fader would obey,
That him ne rought nothing for to be slain:
Right so thy sonne list a lambe to dey:
Now, lady full of mercy, I you prey,
Sith he his mercy sured me so large,
Be ye not scant, for all we sing or say,
That ye been fro vengeaunce aye our targe.

Z.

Zacharie you clepith the open well
That wisht sinfull soule out of his guilt,
Therefore this lesson out I will to tell,
That nere thy tender heart we were spilt.
Now, lady bright, sith thou canst and wilt
Been to the seed of Adam merciable,
Bring us to that paleis that is built
To penitentis, that ben to mercie able.

EXPLICIT.

THE BOOKE OF THE DUTCHESSE,

OR

The Death of Blanch;

COMMONLY ENTITLED, CHAUCER'S DREAM.

v. 1—100

I HAVE great wonder by this light,
How I live, for day ne night
I may not sleepe welnigh nought;
I have so many an idle thought,
Purely for default of sleepe,
That, by my trouth, I take no keepe
Of nothing, how it commeth or gothe.
To me n'is nothing lefe nor lothe,
All is yliche good to me,
Joy or sorrow, where so it be:
For I have feeling in nothing,
But as it were a mased thing,
All day in point to fall adoun,
For sorrowfull imaginaicoun
Is alway wholly in my minde.
And well ye wote, against kinde
It were to liven in this wise,
For nature would not suffise
To none earthly creature,
Not long time to endure
Without sleepe, and be in sorrow:
And I ne may, ne night ne morrow,
Sleepe, and this melancolie
And drede I have for to die,
Defaut of sleepe and heavinesse
Hath slaine my spirit of quickenesse,
That I have lost all lustyhead;
Such fantasies ben in mine head,
So I n'ot what is best to do:
But men might aske me why so
I may not sleepe, and what me is?
But nathelesse, who aske this,
Leseth his asking truely,
My selven cannot tell why
The sooth, but truly as I gesse,
I hold it be a sickenesse
That I have suffred this eight yere,
And yet my boot is never the nere:
For there is phisicien but one,
That may me heale, but that is done:
Passe we over untill efte,
That will not be mote needs be lefte;
Our first matter is good to keepe.
So whan I saw I might not sleepe,
Now of late this other night
Upon my bed I sate upright,
And bade one reach me a booke,
A romaunce, and he it me tooke
To rede, and drive the night away:
For me thought it better play,
Than either at chesse or tables.
And in this booke were written fables,
That clerkes had in old time,
And other poets put in rime,
To rede, and for to be in mind,
While men loved the law of Kinde.
This booke ne spake but of such things,
Of queenes lives, and of kings,
And many other things smale.
Among all this I found a tale,
That me thought a wonder thing.
This was the tale: There was a king
That hight Seys, and had a wife,
The best that might beare life,
And this queene hight Alcione.
So it befell, thereafter soone
This king woll wenden over see:
To tellen shortly, whan that he
Was in the see, thus in this wise,
Such a tempest gan to rise,
That brake her mast, and made it fall,
And cleft her ship, and dreint hem all,
That never was found, as it tels,
Bord, ne man, ne nothing els.
Right thus this king Seys lost his life.
Now for to speake of Alcione his wife:
This lady that was left at home,
Hath wonder that the king ne come
Home, for it was a long terme:
Anon her herte began to yerne,
And for that her thought evermo
It was not wele, her thought so,
She longed so after the king,
That certes it were a pitous thing
To tell her heartely sorrowfull life,
That she had, this noble wife,
For him, alas! she loved alderbest,
Anon she sent both east and west
To seeke him, but they found him nought.
"Alas," (quod she) "that I was wrought,
Whether my lord my love be dead,
Certes I nill never eat bread,
I make a vow to my God here,
But I mowe of my lord here."
Such sorrow this lady to her tooke,
That truly I that made this booke,
Had such pitie and such routh
To rede her sorrow, that by my trouth,
I farde the worse all the morrow
After, to thinken on her sorrow.

So whan this lady coud here no word
That no man might find her lord,
Full oft she swowned, and said "Alas!"
For sorrow full nigh wood she was,
Ne she coud no rede but one,
But downe on knees she sate anone,
And wept, that pitie were to here.
"A mercy, sweet lady dere!"
(Quod she) to Juno her goddesse,
"Helpe me out of this distresse,
And yeve me grace my lord to see
Soone, or wete where so he bee,
Or how he fareth or in what wise,
And I shall make you sacrifice,
And holy yours become I shall,
With good will, body, herte, and all;
And but thou wolt this, lady swete,
Send me grace to slepe and mete
In my sleepe some certain sweven,
Where through that I may know even
Whether my lord be quicke or dead."
With that word she hing downe the head,
And fell in a swowne, as cold as stone;
Her women caught her up anone,
And brought her in bed all naked,
And she, forweped and forwaked,
Was weary, and thus the dead sleepe
Fell on her or she tooke keepe,
Through Juno, that had heard her boone,
That made her to sleepe soone;
For as she praide, right so was done
Indeed, for Juno right anone
Called thus her messengere
To do her errand, and he come nere;
Whan he was come she bad him thus:
"Go bet" (quod Juno) "to Morpheus,
"Thou knowest him well, the god of sleepe,
Now understand well, and take keepe;
Say thus on my halfe, that hee
Go fast into the great see,
And bid him that on all thing
He take up Seys body the king,
That lieth full pale, and nothing rody,
Bid him creepe into the body,
And do it gone to Alcione,
The queene, there she lieth alone,
And shew her shortly, it is no nay,
How it was dreint this other day,
And do the body speake right so,
Right as it was wonted to do,
The whiles that it was alive;
Go now fast, and hye thee blive."
This messenger took leve and went
Upon his way, and never he stent
Till he came to the darke valley
That stant betweene rockes twey,
There never yet grew corne ne gras,
Ne tree, ne naught that aught was,
Beast ne man, ne naught els,
Save that there were a few wels
Came renning fro the cliffes adowne,
That made a deadly sleeping sowne,
And rennen downe right by a cave,
That was under a rocke ygrave
Amid the valley wonder deepe,
There these goddes lay asleepe,
Morpheus and Eclympasteire,
That was the god of sleepes heire,
That slept, and did none other werke.
This cave was also as derke
As Hell pitte, over all about
They had good leyser for to rout,
To vye who might sleepe best,
Some hing hir chin upon hir brest,
And slept upright hir head yhed,
And some lay naked in hir bed,
And slept whiles their daies last.
This messenger come renning fast,
And cried "Ho, ho, awake anone!"
It was for nought, there heard him none.
"Awake!" (quod he) "who lieth there?"
And blew his horne right in hir ear,
And cried "Awaketh!" wonder hye.
This god of sleepe, with his one eye,
Cast up, and asked "Who clepeth there?"
"It am I," (quod this messengere)
"Juno bade thou shouldest gone,"
And told him what he should done,
As I have told you here before,
It is no need rehearse it more,
And went his way whan he had saide:
Anone, this god of slepe abraide
Out of his sleepe and gan to go,
And did as he had bidde him do;
Tooke up the dead body soone,
And bare it forth to Alcyone,
His wife the queene, there as she lay,
Right even a quarter before day,
And stood right at her beds fete,
And called her right as she hete
By name, and said, "My swete wife,
Awake! let be your sorrowfull life,
For in your sorrow there lyeth no rede,
For certes, sweet love, I am but dede,
Ye shall me never on live ysee.
But, good sweet herte, looke that yee
Bury my body, for such a tide
Ye mowe it find the see beside,
And farewell sweet, my worlds blisse,
I pray God your sorrow lisse;
Too little while our blisse lasteth."
With that her eyen up she casteth,
And saw naught: "Alas!" (quod she) for sorrow,
And died within the third morrow.
But what she said more in that swowe,
I may not tell it you as now,
It were too long for to dwell;
My first mattere I will you tell,
Wherefore I have told you this thing,
Of Alcione, and Seis the king.
For thus much dare I say wele,
I had be dolven every dele,
And dead, right through defaut of sleepe,
If I ne had red, and take kepe
Of this tale next before,
And I will tell you wherefore,
For I ne might for bote ne bale
Sleepe, or I had redde this tale
Of this dreint Seis the king,
And of the gods of sleeping.
Whan I had red this tale wele,
And overlooked it everydele,
Me thought wonder if it were so,
For I had never heard speake or tho
Of no gods, that coud make
Men to sleepe, ne for to wake,
For I ne knew never God but one,
And in my game I said anone,
And yet me list right evill to pley,
Rather than that I should dey

Through defaut of sleeping thus,
I would give thilke Morpheus,
Or that goddesse dame Juno,
Or some wight els, I ne rought who,
To make me slepe and have some rest,
I will give him the alther best
Yeft, that ever he abode his live,
And here onward, right now as blive,
If he woll make me sleepe alite,
Of downe of pure doves white,
I woll yeve him a featherbed,
Raied with gold, and right well cled,
In fine blacke sattin d'outremere,
And many a pillow, and every bere,
Of cloth of raines to slepe on soft,
Him there not need to turne oft,
And I woll yeve him al that fals
To his chamber and to his hals,
I woll do paint with pure gold,
And tapite hem full manyfold,
Of one sute this shall he have
If I wist where were his cave,
If he can make me sleepe soone,
As did the goddesse queene Alcyone,
And thus this ilke god Morpheus
May win of me mo fees thus
Than ever he wan : and to Juno,
That is his goddesse, I shall so do,
I trowe that she shall hold her paid.
I had unneth that word ysaid,
Right thus as I have told you,
That suddainly I n'ist how,
Such a lust anone me tooke
To sleepe, that right upon my booke
I fell a sleepe, and therewith even
Me mette so inly such a sweven,
So wonderfull, that never yet
I trowe no man had the wit
To conne well my sweven rede.
No, not Joseph without drede
Of Egypt, he that rad so
The kinges meting, Pharao,
No more than coud the least of us.
Ne nat scarcely Macrobeus,
He that wrote all the avision
That he mette of king Scipion,
The noble man, the African,
Such mervailes fortuned than,
I trow arede my dreames even,
Lo, thus it was, this was my sweven.
Me thought thus, that it was May,
And in the dawning there I lay,
Me mette thus in my bed all naked,
And looked forth for I was waked,
With smale foules a great hepe,
That had afraied me out of my slepe,
Through noise and sweetnesse of hir song,
And as me mette, they sat among
Upon my chamber roofe without
Upon the tyles over all about.
And everiche song in his wise
The most solemne servise
By note, that ever man I trow
Had heard, for some of hem sung low,
Some high, and all of one accord,
To tell shortly at o word,
Was never heard so sweet steven,
But it had be a thing of Heven,
So merry a sowne, so sweet entunes,
That certes for the towne of Tewnes
I n'olde but I had heard hem sing,
For all my chamber gan to ring,
Through singing of hir ermony,
For instrument nor melody
Was no where heard yet halfe so swete,
Nor of accord halfe so mete,
For there was none of hem that fained
To sing, for ech of hem him pained
To find out many crafty notes,
They ne spared nat hir throtes ;
And, sooth to saine, my chamber was
Full well depainted, and with glas
Were all the windowes well yglased
Full clere, and nat an hole yerased,
That to behold it was great joy,
For holy all the story of Troy
Was in the glaising ywrought thus,
Of Hector, and of king Priamus,
Of Achilles, and of king Laomedon,
And eke of Medea and Jason,
Of Paris, Heleine, and of Lavine,
And all the wals with colours fine
Were paint, both text and glose,
And all the Romaunt of the Rose ;
My windowes weren shit echone,
And through the glasse the Sunne shone
Upon my bed with bright bemes,
With many glad glidy stremes,
And eke the welkin was so faire,
Blew, bright, clere was the aire,
And full attempre, for sooth it was,
For neyther too cold ne hote it n'as,
Ne in all the welkin was no cloud.
And as I lay thus, wonder loud
Me thought I heard a hunte blow
T'assay his great horne, and for to know
Whether it was clere, or horse of sowne.
And I heard going both up and downe
Men, horse, hounds, and other thing,
And all men speake of hunting,
How they would slee the hart with strength,
And how the hart had upon length
So much enbosed, I n'ot now what.
Anon right whan I heard that,
How that they would on hunting gone,
I was right glad, and up anone,
Tooke my horse, and forth I went
Out of my chamber, I never stent
Till I come to the field without,
There overtooke I a great rout
Of hunters and eke forresters,
And many relaies and limers,
And highed hem to the forrest fast,
And I with hem, so at the last
I asked one lad, a lymere,
"Say, fellow, who shall hunte here ?"
(Quod I) and he answered ayen,
"Sir, the emperour Octavien"
(Quod he) "and is here fast by."
"A goddes halfe, in good time," (quod I)
Go we fast, and gan to ride ;
Whan we come to the forrest side,
Every man did right soone,
As to hunting fell to done.
The maister hunte, anone, fote hote
With his horne blew three mote
At the uncoupling of his houndis,
Within a while the hart found is,
Yhallowed, and rechased fast
Long time, and so, at the last,

This hart rouzed and stale away
Fro all the hounds a previe way.
The hounds had overshot him all,
And were upon a default yfall,
Therewith the hunte wonder fast
Blew a forloyn at the last;
I was go walked fro my tree,
And as I went, there came by me
A whelpe, that fawned me as I stood,
That had yfollowed, and coud no good,
It came and crept to me as low,
Right as it had me yknow,
Held downe his head, and joyned his eares,
And laid all smooth downe his heares.
I would have caught it anone,
It fled and was fro me gone,
As I him followed, and it forth went
Downe by a floury grene it went
Full thicke of grasse, full soft and sweet,
With floures fele, faire under feet,
And little used, it seemed thus,
For both Flora and Zepherus,
They two, that make floures grow,
Had made hir dwelling there I trow,
For it was on to behold,
As though the earth envye wold
To be gayer than the heven,
To have mo floures such seven
As in the welkin sterres be,
It had forgot the poverte
That winter, through his cold morrowes,
Had made it suffer, and his sorrowes;
All was foryeten, and that was seene,
For all the wood was woxen greene,
Sweetnesse of dewe had made it waxe.
It is no need eke for to axe
Where there were many greene greves,
Or thicke of trees so full of leves,
And every tree stood by himselve
Fro other, well tenne foot or twelve,
So great trees, so huge of strength,
Of fortie or fiftie fadome length,
Cleane without bowe or sticke,
With croppes brode, and eke as thicke,
They were not an inch asunder,
That it was shadde over all under,
And many an hart and many an hind
Was both before me and behind,
Of fawnes, sowers, buckes, does,
Was full the wood, and many roes,
And many squirrels, that sete,
Full high upon the trees and ete,
And in hir manner made feasts:
Shortly, it was so full of beasts,
That though Argus, the noble countour,
Sate to recken in his countour,
And recken with his figures ten,
For by tho figures newe all ken
If they be craftie, recken and nombre,
And tell of every thing the nombre,
Yet should he faile to recken even
The wonders me met in my sweven:
But forth I romed right wonder fast
Downe the wood, so at the last
I was ware of a man in blacke,
That sate, and had yturned his backe
To an oke, an huge tree:
"Lord," thought I, "who may that bee?
What eyleth him to sitten here?"
Anon right I went nere,
Than found I sitte, even upright,
A wonder welfaring knight,
By the manner me thought so,
Of good mokel, and right yonge thereto,
Of the age of foure and twentie yeere,
Upon his beard but little heere,
And he was clothed all in blacke.
I stalked even unto his backe,
And there I stood as still as ought,
The sooth to say, he saw me nought,
For why he hing his head adowne,
And with a deadly sorrowfull sowne,
He made of rime ten verses or twelve,
Of a complaint to himselve,
The most pitie, the most routh,
That ever I heard, for, by my trouth,
It was great wonder that nature
Might suffer any creature
To have such sorrow, and he not ded:
Full pitous pale, and nothing red,
He said a lay, a manner song,
Without note, without song
And was this, for full well I can
Rehearse it, right thus it began.
"I have of sorrow so great wone,
That joy get I never none,
Now that I see my lady bright,
Which I have loved with all my might,
Is fro me dead, and is agone,
And thus in sorrow left me alone.
Alas, Death, what eyleth thee,
That thou n'oldest have taken me,
Whan that thou tooke my lady swete?
Of all goodnesse she had none mete,
That was so faire, so fresh, so free,
So good, that men may well see."
Whan he had made thus his complaint,
His sorrowfull herte gan fast faint,
And his spirits wexen dead,
The blood was fled for pure dread
Down to his herte, to maken him warme,
For well it feeled the herte had harme,
To wete eke why it was adrad
By kinde, and for to make it glad,
For it is member principall
Of the body, and that made all
His hewe chaunge, and wexe grene
And pale, for there no blood is seene
In no manner limme of his.
Anon, therewith, whan I saw this,
He farde thus evill there he sete,
I went and stood right at his fete,
And grette him, but he spake nought
But argued with his owne thought,
And in his wit disputed fast,
Why, and how his life might last,
Him thought his sorrowes were so smart,
And lay so cold upon his herte.
So, through his sorrow, and holy thought,
Made him that he heard me nought,
For he had welnigh lost his minde,
Though Pan, that men clepeth god of kinde,
Were for his sorrowes never so wroth.
But at the last, to faine right sooth,
He was ware of me, how I stood
Before him and did off my hood,
And had ygret him, as I best coud
Debonairly, and nothing loud,
He said, "I pray thee, be not wroth,
I heard thee not, to saine the sooth,

Ne I saw the not, sir, truly."
"Ah, good sir, no force," (quod I)
"I am right sorry, if I have ought
Distroubled you out of your thought,
Foryeve me, if I have misse-take."
"Yes, thamends is light to make"
(Quod he) "for there lithe none thereto,
There is nothing mis-saide, nor do."
Lo, how goodly spake this knight,
As it had be another wight,
And made it neyther tough ne queint,
And I saw that, and gan me acqueint
With him, and found him so tretable,
Right wonder skilfull and reasonable,
As me thought, for all his bale,
Anon right I gan find a tale
To him, to looke where I might ought
Have more knowledging of his thought.
"Sir," (quod I) "this game is done,
I holde that this hart be gone,
These huntes can him no where see."
"I do no force thereof," (quod he)
"My thought is thereon never adele."
"By our lord," (quod I) "I trow you wele,
Right so me thinketh by your chere,
But, sir, o thing woll ye here,
Me thinketh in great sorrow I you see,
But certes, sir, if that ye
Would aught discovre me your wo,
I would, as wise God helpe me so,
Amend it, if I can or may,
Ye mowe prove it by assay,
For, by my trouth, to make you hole,
I woll do all my power whole,
And telleth me of your sorrowes smart,
Paraunter it may ease your herte,
That semeth full sicke under your side."
With that he looked on me aside,
As who saith nay, that n'ill not be.
"Graunt mercy, good friend," (quod he)
"I thanke thee that thou wouldest so,
But it may never the rather be do,
No man may my sorrow glade,
That maketh my hew to fall and fade,
And hath my understanding lorne,
That me is wo that I was borne,
May nought make my sorrowes slide,
Not all the remedies of Ovide,
Ne Orpheus, god of melodie,
Ne Dedalus with his playes slie,
Ne heale me may no phisicien,
Nought Ipocras, ne Galien,
Me is wo that I live houres twelve,
But who so woll assay hemselve,
Whether his herte can have pite
Of any sorrow let him see me,
I wretch that death hath made all naked
Of all the blisse that ever was maked,
Ywroth werste of all wights,
That hate my dayes and my nights,
My life, my lustes, be me loth,
For all fare and I be wroth,
The pure death is so full my fo,
That I would die, it will not so,
For whan I follow it, it will flie,
I would have him, it n'ill not me,
This is pain without reed,
Alway dying, and be not deed,
That Tesiphus, that lieth in Hell,
May not of more sorrow tell:
And who so wist all, by my trouth,
My sorrow, but he had routh
And pitie of my sorrows smart,
That man hath a fiendly herte:
For whoso seeth me first on morrow,
May saine he hath met with sorrow,
For I am sorrow, and sorrow is I,
Alas, and I will tell thee why,
My sorrow is tourned to plaining,
And all my laughter to weeping,
My glad thoughts to heavinesse,
In travaile is mine idlenesse,
And eke my rest, my wele is wo,
My good is harme, and evermo
In wrath is tourned my playing,
And my delite into sorrowing,
Mine heale is tourned into sicknesse,
In dred is all my sikernesse,
To derke is turned all my light,
My witte is foly, my day is night,
My love is hate, my slepe wakyng,
My mirth and meales is fastyng,
My countenaunce is nicete,
And all abawed, where so I be,
My peace pleding, and in werre
Alas, how might I fare werre!
"My boldnesse is turned to shame,
For false Fortune hath played a game
At the chesse with me, alas the while,
The trayteresse false, and full of gile,
That al behoteth, and nothing halte,
She gothe upright, and yet she halte,
That baggeth foule, and loketh fayre,
The dispitous debonaire,
That scorneth many a creature,
An ydole of false purtraiture
Is she, for she woll sone wryen,
She is the monstres heed ywryen,
As filth over ystrowed with floures,
Her most worship and her floures
To lyen, for that is her nature,
Without faith, lawe, or mesure,
She false is, and ever laughing
With one eye, and that other weping,
That is brought up, she set al downe:
I liken her to the scorpiowne,
That is a false flattering beest,
For with his head he maketh feest,
But all amid his flatering,
With his taile he will sting
And envenim, and so will she:
She is the envious Charite,
That is aye false, and semeth wele,
So turneth she her false whele
About, for it is nothing stable,
Now by the fire, now at table,
Full many one hath she thus yblent,
She is play of enchauntment,
That seemeth one, and is not so,
The false thefe, what hath she do,
Trowest thou! by our Lord, I will thee say;
At the chesse with me she gan to play,
With her false draughtes full divers
She stale on me, and toke my fers,
And whan I sawe my fers away,
Alas, I couth no lenger play,
But said, "Farewell sweet ywis,
And farewell all that ever there is:"
Therewith Fortune said, "Checke here,"
And mate in the mid point of the checkere,

With a paune errant, alas,
Full craftier to play she was
Than Athalus, that made the game
First of the chesse, so was his name :
But God wolde I had ones or twise,
Yconde, and know the jeoperdise,
That coude the Greke Pythagores,
I shulde have plaide the bet at ches,
And kept my fers the bet thereby,
And though whereto, for trewly,
I holde that wishe not worthe a stre,
It had be never the bet for me,
For Fortune can so many a wyle,
There be but few can her begile,
And eke she is the lasse to blame,
My selfe I wolde have do the same,
Before God, had I been as she,
She ought the more excused be,
For this I say yet more thereto,
Had I be God, and might have do,
My will, whan she my fers caught,
I wold have drawe the same draught:
For also wise, God give me reste,
I dare well swere, she toke the best,
But through that draught I have lorne
My blisse, alas, that I was borne !
For evermore, I trowe trewly,
For all my will, my lust wholly
Is turned, but ye, what to done,
By our Lorde it is to die sone :
For nothing I leave it nought,
But live and die, right in this thought.
For there n'is planet in firmament,
Ne in ayre ne in erth none element,
That they ne yeve me a yeft echone,
Of weping whan I am alone :
For whan that I advise me wele,
And bethinke me everydele,
How that there lieth in rekening,
In my sorrow for nothing,
And how there liveth no gladnesse
May glad me of my distresse,
And how I have lost suffisaunce,
And thereto I have no pleasaunce,
Than may I say, I have right nought ;
And whan al this falleth in my thought,
Alas, than am I overcome,
For that is done, is not to come ;
I have more sorrow than Tantale."
And I herde him tell this tale
Thus pitously, as I you tell,
Unneth might I lenger dwell :
It did mine herte so much wo.
" A good sir," (quod I) " say nat so,
Have some pitie on your nature,
That fourmed you to creature,
Remembreth you of Socrates,
For he counted not three strees
Of nought that Fortune coude do."
" No," (quod he) " I can not so."
" Why, good sir, yes parde," (quod I)
" Ne say not so for truely,
Though ye had lost the feerses twelve
And ye for sorrow murdred your selve,
Ye should be dampned in this cas,
By as good right as Medea was,
That slough her children for Jason,
And Phyllis also for Demophon
Hing her selfe, so welaway,
For he had broke his terme day
To come to her : another rage
Had Dido, the quene eke of Cartage,
That slough her selfe for Eneas
Was false, which a foole she was :
And Ecquo died for Narcissus
N'olde nat love her, and right thus
Hath many another folly done,
And for Dalida died Sampsone,
That slough himselfe with a pillere,
But there is no man alive here
Would for hir fers make this wo."
" Why so ?" (quod he) " it is not so,
Thou wotest full little what thou menest,
I have lost more than thou wenest :"
" How may that be" (quod I)
" Good sir, tell me all holy,
In what wise, how, why and wherefore,
That ye have thus your blisse lore ?"
" Blithely," (quod he) " come sit doun,
I tell thee upon a conditioun,
That thou shalt holy with all thy wit
Doe thine entent to hearken it."
" Yes sir :"—" Swere thy trouth thereto,
Gladly do, than hold here to."
" I shall right blithely, so God me save,
Holy with all the wit I have,
Here you as well as I can :"
" A goddes halfe," (quod he) and began.
" Sir," (quod he) " sith first I couth
Have any manner wit fro youth,
Or kindly understanding,
To comprehend in any thing
What Love was, in mine owne wit,
Dredelesse I have ever yet
Be tributarie, and yeve rent
To Love holy, with good entent.
And through pleasaunce become his thral,
With good will, body, herte, and all,
All this I put in his servage,
As to my lord, and did homage,
And full devoutly I praide him tho,
He should beset mine herte so,
That it pleasaunce to him were,
And worship to my lady dere.
" And this was long, and many a yere
(Ere that mine herte was set o where)
That I did thus, and n'ist why,
I trowe it came me kindely,
Paraunter I was thereto most able,
As a white wall, or a table,
For it is ready to catch and take
All that men will therein make,
Whether so men will portrey or paint,
Be the werkes never so queint.
" And thilke time I fared right so,
I was able to have learned tho,
And to have conde as well or better
Paraunter either art or letter,
But for love came first in my thought,
Therefore I forgate it naught,
I chees love to my first craft,
Therefore it is with me laft,
For why, I tooke it of so yong age,
That malice had my courage ;
Not that time turned to nothing,
Through too mokell knowledging,
For that time youth my maistresse
Governed me in idlenesse,
For it was in my first youth,
And tho full little good I couth,

For all my werkes were flitting
That time, and all my thought varying,
All were to me yliche good,
That knew I tho, but thus it stood.
"It happed that I came on a day
Into a place, there that I sey
Truly, the fairest companie
Of ladies, that ever man with eie
Had seene togither in o place,
Shall I clepe it hap either grace,
That brought me there? not but Fortune,
That is to lien full commune,
The false tratieresse perverse,
God would I could clepe her werse,
For now she worcheth me full wo,
And I woll tell soone why so.
"Amonge these ladies thus echone,
Sooth to saine, I saw one
That was like none of the rout,
For I dare swere, without dout,
That as the summers Sunne bright
Is fairer, clerer, and hath more light
Than any other planet in Heven,
The Moone, or the sterres seven,
For all the world so had she
Surmounten hem all of beaute,
Of maner, and of comlinesse,
Of stature, and of well set gladnesse,
Of goodly heed, and so wel besey,
Shortly what shall I more sey?
By God and by his halowes twelve,
It was my swete, right all her selve,
She had so stedfast countenaunce,
So noble porte, and maintenaunce:
And Love, that well harde my bone,
Had espied me thus sone,
That she full soone in my thought,
As helpe me God, so was I cought
So sodainly, that I ne toke
No maner counsaile, but at her loke,
And at mine herte, for why her eyen
So gladly I trowe mine herte seyne,
That purely tho, mine owne thought,
Said, it were better serve her for nought,
Than with another to be wele,
And it was soth, for every dele,
I will anone right tell thee why.
"I sawe her daunce so comely,
Carol and sing so swetely,
Laugh, and play so womanly,
And looke so debonairly,
So goodly speke and so freendly,
That certes I trowe that evermore,
Nas sene so blisfull a tresore:
For every heer on her heed,
Sothe to say, it was not reed,
Ne neither yelowe ne browne it nas,
Me thought most like gold it was,
And which eyen my lady had,
Debonaire, good, glad, and sad,
Simple, of good mokel, not to wide,
Thereto her loke nas not aside,
Ne overthwart, but beset so wele,
It drewe and tooke up everydele
All that on her gan behold,
Her eyen semed anone she wold
Have mercy, folly wenden so,
But it was never the rather do,
It nas no counterfeted thing,
It was her owne pure loking,
That the goddesse, dame Nature,
Had made hem open by measure,
And close, for were she never so glad,
Her looking was not folish sprad,
Ne wildely, though that she plaid,
But ever me thought, her eyen said,
By God my wrath is al foryeve.
Therewith her list so well to live,
That dulnesse was of her adrad,
She n'as to sobre ne to glad,
In all things more measure,
Had never I trowe creature,
But many one with her loke she herte,
And that sate her full litel at herte:
For she knew nothing of hir thought,
But whether she knew, or knew it nought,
Algate she ne rought of hem a stree,
To get her love no nere n'as he
That woned at home, than he in Inde,
The formest was alway behinde;
But good folke over all other,
She loved as man may his brother,
Of which love she was wonder large,
In skilfull places that bere charge:
But which a visage had she thereto,
Alas, my herte is wonder wo,
That I ne can discriven it;
Me lacketh both English and wit,
For to undo it at the full,
And eke my spirites bene so dull
So great a thing for to devise,
I have not wit that can suffise
To comprehend her beaute,
But thus much I dare sain, that she
Was white, rody, fresh, and lifely hewed,
And every day her beaute newed,
And nigh her face was alderbest,
For certes Nature had soch lest
To make that faire, that truly she
Was her chiefe patron of beaute,
And chiefe ensample of all her werke
And monster: for be it never so derke,
Me thinketh I see her ever mo,
And yet more over, though all tho
That ever lived were now a live,
Ne would have found to discrive
In all her face a wicked signe,
For it was sad, simple, and benigne.
"And soch a goodly swete speech,
Had that swete, my lives leech,
So frendely, and so well ygrounded
Upon all reason, so well yfounded,
And so tretable to all good,
That I dare swere well by the rood,
Of eloquence was never fonde
So swete a souning faconde,
Ne trewer tonged, ne scorned lasse,
Ne bet coude heale, that by the masse,
I durst sweare though the pope it songe,
That there was never yet through her tonge,
Man ne woman greatly harmid,
As for her, was all harme hid:
Ne lasse flattering in her worde,
That purely her simple recorde,
Was found as trewe as any bond,
Or trouth of any mans hond.
"Ne chide she could never a dele,
That knoweth all the world ful wele.
But such a fairenesse of a necke,
Had that swete, that bone nor brecke

Nas there none seen that mis-satte,
It was white, smoth, streight, and pure flatte,
Without hole or cancl bone,
And by seming, she had none.
"Her throte, as I have now memoire,
Semed as a round toure of yvoire,
Of good greatnesse, and not to grete,
And faire white she hete,
That was my ladies name right,
She was thereto faire and bright,
She had not her name wrong,
Right faire shoulders, and body long
She had, and armes ever lith
Fattish, fleshy, nat great therewith,
Right white hands, and nailes rede,
Round brestes, and of good brede
Her lippes were, a streight flatte backe,
I knew on her none other lacke,
That all her limmes n'ere pure sewing,
In as ferre as I had knowing;
Thereto she could so well play
What that her list, that I dare say
That was like to torch bright,
That every man may take of light
Ynough, and it hath never the lesse
Of maner and of comelinesse.
"Right so farde my lady dere,
For every wight of her manere
Mought catche ynough, if that he wold
If he had eyen her to behold,
For I dare sweare well, if that she
Had among tenne thousand be,
She wolde have be at the beste,
A chefe myrrour of all the feste,
Though they had stonde in a rowe,
To mens eyen, that could have knowe,
For where so men had plaide or waked,
Me thought the felowship as naked
Without her, that I saw ones,
As a crowne without stones,
Trewly, she was to mine eye,
The solein fenix of Arabie,
For there liveth never but one,
Ne such as she ne know I none:
To speake of goodnesse, trewly she
Had as moch debonairte
As ever had Hester in the Bible,
And more, if more were possible,
And soth to sayne, therewithall
She had a witte so generall,
So whole enclined to all good,
That al her witte was sette by the rood,
Without malice upon gladnesse,
And thereto I sawe never yet a lesse
Harmefull than she was in doyng,
I say not that she ne had knowyng
What harme was, or els she
Had coulde no good, so thinketh me,
And trewly, for to speake of trouth,
But she had had, it had be routh;
Thereof she had so moch her dele,
And I dare saine, and swere it wele,
That Trouth himselfe, over al and al,
Had chose his maner principall
In her, that was his resting place,
Thereto she had the most grace,
To have stedfast perseveraunce,
And easy attempre governaunce,
That ever I knew, or wist yet,
So pure suffraunt was her wit,
And reason gladly she understood,
It folowed wel, she coulde good,
She used gladly to do wele,
These were her maners every dele.
"Therewith she loved so wel right,
She wrong do would to no wight,
No wight might do her no shame,
She loved so wel her own name.
"Her lust to hold no wight in bond,
Ne be thou siker, she wold not fond,
To holde no wight in balaunce,
By halfe word ne by countenaunce,
But if men wold upon her lye,
Ne sende men into Walakie,
To Pruise, and to Tartarie,
To Alisaundrie, ne into Turkie,
And bidde him fast, anone that he
Go hoodlesse into the drie see,
And come home by the Carrenare.
"And sir, be now right ware,
That I may of you here saine,
Worship, or that ye come againe.
"She ne used no soch knackes smale,
But therfore that I tell my tale,
Right on this same I have said,
Was wholly all my love laid,
For certes she was that swete wife,
My suffisaunce, my lust, my life,
Mine hope, mine heale, and all blesse,
My worlds welfare, and my goddesse,
And I wholy hers, and every dele."
"By our Lorde," (quod I) "I trowe you wele,
Hardly, your love was wel beset,
I n'ot how it might have do bet."
"Bet, ne not so wel," (quod he)
"I trowe sir," (quod I) "parde."
"Nay, leve it well:"—"Sir, so do I,
I leve you wel, that trewly
You thought that she was the best,
And to behold the alderfairest,
Who so had loked her with your eyen."
"With mine? nay, all that her seyen,
Said and swore it was so,
And though they ne had, I would tho
Have loved best my lady free,
Though I had had al the beaute
That ever had Alcibiades,
And al the strength of Hercules,
And thereto had the worthinesse
Of Alisaunder, and all the richesse
That ever was in Babiloine,
In Cartage, or in Macedoine,
Or in Rome, or in Ninive,
And thereto also hardy be
As was Hector, so have I joy,
That Achilles slough at Troy,
(And therefore was he slayne also
In a temple, for both two
Were slaine, he and Antilegius,
And so saith Dares Frigius
For love of Polixena),
Or ben as wise as Minerva,
I would ever, without drede,
Have loved her, for I must nede.
"Nede? Nay, trewly I gabbe now,
Nought nede, and I woll tellen how,
For of good will mine herte it wold,
And eke to love her, I was holde,
As for the fayrest and the best,
She was as good, so have I rest,

As ever was Penelope of Greece,
Or as the noble wife Lucrece,
That was the best, he telleth thus
The Romaine, Titus Livius,
She was as good, and nothing like,
Though hir stories be autentike,
Algate she was as trewe as she.
"But wherefore that I tell thee?
Whan I first my lady sey,
I was right yong, soth to sey,
And full great need I had to lerne,
Whan mine herte wolde yerne,
To love it was a great emprise,
But as my wit wolde best suffise,
After my yong childely wit,
Without drede I beset it,
To love her in my best wise
To do her worship and the servise
That I coude tho, by my trouth,
Without faining, eyther slouth,
For wonder faine I wolde her see,
So mokell it amended mee,
That whan I sawe her amorowe
I was warished of all my sorowe
Of all day after, till it were eve,
Me thought nothing might me greve,
Were my sorowes never so smert,
And yet she set so in mine herte,
That by my trouth, I n'old nought
For all this world, out of my thought
Leave my lady, no trewly."
"Now, by my trouth, sir," (quod I)
"Me thinketh ye have such a chaunce,
As shrift, without repentaunce."
"Repentaunce, nay fie!" (quod he)
"Shuld I now repent me
To love, nay certes, than were I well
Worse than was Achitofell,
Or Antenor, so have I joy,
The traitour that betrayed Troy:
Or the false Ganellion,
He that purchased the trayson
Of Rouland and of Olivere:
Nay, while I am alive here,
I n'ill foryet her never mo."
"Now good sir," (quod I tho)
Ye have well told me here before,
It is no need to reherse it more,
How ye saw her first, and where,
But would ye tell me the manere,
To her which was your first speche,
Thereof I would you beseche,
And how she knew first your thought,
Whether ye loved her or nought,
And telleth me eke, what ye have lore,
I herde you tell here before,
Ye said, 'thou n'otest what thou meanest,
I have lost more than thou weenest:'
What losse is that?" (quod I tho)
"N'il she not love you, is it so?
Or have ye ought done amis,
That she hath lefte you, is it this?
For Goddes love tell me all."
"Before God," (quod he) "and I shall,
I say right as I have said,
On her was all my love laid,
And yet she n'ist it not never a dele,
Not longe time, leve it wele,
For by right siker, I durst nought
For all this world tell her my thought,
Ne I wolde have trothed her trewly,
For wost thou why, she was lady
Of the body that had the herte,
And whoso hath that may not asterte.
"But for to keepe me fro ydlenesse,
Trewly I did my businesse
To make songes, as I best coude,
And oft time I song hem loude,
And made songes, this a great dele,
Although I coude nat make so wele
Songes, ne knew the arte al,
As coude Lamekes son, Tubal,
That found out first the arte of songe,
For as his brothers hammers ronge,
Upon his anvelt, up and downe,
Thereof he toke the first sowne.
"But Grekes saine of Pithagoras,
That he the first finder was
Of the art, Aurora telleth so,
But thereof no force of hem two:
Algates songes thus I made,
Of my feling, mine herte to glade;
And lo, this was alther first,
I n'ot where it were the werst.
"'Lord, it maketh mine herte light,
Whan I thinke on that swete wight,
That is so semely one to se,
And wish to God it might so be
That she wold hold me for her knight,
My lady, that is so fayre and bright.'
"Now have I told thee, soth to say
My first song: upon a day,
I bethought me what wo
And sorowe that I suffred tho,
For her, and yet she wist it nought,
Ne tell her durst I not my thought:
Alas, thought I, I can no rede,
And but I tell her I am but dede,
And if I tel her, to say right soth,
I am adradde she woll be wroth,
Alas, what shal I than do?
In this debate I was so wo,
Me thought mine herte brast atwain,
So at the last, sothe for to saine,
I bethought me that Nature
Ne formed never in creature
So much beauty, trewly,
And bounty without mercy.
"In hope of that, my tale I tolde,
With sorowe, as that I never sholde,
For nedes, and maugre mine heed
I must have tolde her, or be deed:
I n'ot well how that I began,
Full yvell reherce it I can,
And eke, as helpe me God withall,
I trow it was in the dismall,
That was the ten woundes of Egipt,
For many a word I overskipt
In my tale for pure fere,
Lest my wordes mis-set were,
With sorowfull herte and woundes dede,
Soft and quaking for pure drede,
And shame, and stinting in my tale,
For ferde, and mine hew al pale,
Full oft I wexte both pale and red,
Bowing to her I hing the hed,
I durst not ones loke her on,
For wit, manner, and all was gone;
I said, 'Mercy,' and no more,
It n'as no game, it sate me sore.

"So at the last, soth to saine,
Whan that mine herte was com againe,
To tell shortly all my speech,
With hole herte I gan her beseech
That she wolde be my lady swete,
And swore, and hertely gan her hete,
Ever to be stedfast and trewe,
And love her alway freshly newe,
And never other lady have,
And all her worship for to save,
As I best coude, I sware her this,
'For yours is all that ever there is,
For evermore, mine herte swete,
And never to false you, but I mete
I n'il, as wise God helpe me so.'
"And whan I had my tale ydo,
God wote, she acompted not a stre
Of all my tale, so thought me,
To tell shortly right as it is,
Trewly her answere it was this,
I can not now well countrefete
Her wordes, but this was the grete
Of her answere, she said nay
All utterly: alas that day!
The sorow I suffered and the wo,
That trewly Cassandra that so
Bewayled the destruction
Of Troy, and of Illion,
Had never such sorow as I tho;
I durst no more say thereto
For pure feare, but stale away,
And thus I lived full many a day,
That trewly, I had no need,
Ferther than my beddes heed,
Never a day to seche sorrow,
I found it ready every morrow,
For why I loved in no gere.
"So it befell another yere,
I thought ones I would fonde,
To doe her know and understonde
My wo, and she well understood,
That I ne wilned thing but good,
And worship, and to keepe her name,
Over all things, and drede her shame,
And was so busie her to serve,
And pitie were that I should sterve,
Sith that I wilned no harme ywis.
"So whan my lady knew all this,
My lady yave me all holy,
The noble yeft of her mercy,
Saving her worship by all ways,
Dredelesse, I mene none other ways,
And therewith she yave me a ring,
I trowe it was the first thing,
But if mine herte was ywaxe
Glad that it is no need to axe.
"As helpe me God, I was as blive
Raised, as fro death to live,
Of all happes the alderbest,
The gladdest and the most at rest,
For truely that swete wight,
Whan I had wrong, and she the right,
She would alway so goodly
Foryeve me so debonairly,
In all my youth, in all chaunce,
She tooke in her governaunce,
Therewith she was alway so true,
Our joy was ever yliche newe,
Our hertes were so even a paire,
That never n'as that one contrarie
To that other, for no wo
For soth yliche they suffred tho.
O blisse, and eke o sorow bothe,
Yliche they were both glad and wrothe,
All was us one, without were,
And thus we lived full many a yere,
So well, I can not tell how."
"Sir," (quod I) "where is she now?"
"Now?" (quod he) and stinte anone,
Therewith he woxe as dedde as stone,
And saied, "Alas, that I was bore!
That was the losse, that herebefore
I tolde thee that I had lorne.
"Bethinke thee how I said here beforne,
Thou woste full litle what thou menest,
I have loste more than thou wenest.
"God wote alas, right that was she."
"Alas sir, how, what may that be?" [trouth."
"She is dedde:"—"Nay?"—"Yes, by my
"Is that your losse? by God it is routhe."
And with that worde right anone,
They gan to strake forth, all was done
For that time, the hart huntyng.
With that me thought that this kyng,
Gan homeward for to ride
Unto a place was there beside,
Which was from us but a lite,
A long castell with walles white,
By sainct Johan, on a rich hill,
As me mette, but thus it fill.
Right thus me mette, as I you tell,
That in the castell there was a bell,
As it had smitte houres twelve,
Therewith I awoke my selve,
And found me lying in my bedde,
And the booke that I had redde,
Of Alcione and Seis the kyng,
And of the goddes of sleping,
Yfound it in mine hond full even;
Thought I, this is so queint a sweven,
That I would by processe of tyme,
Fonde to put this sweven in ryme,
As I can best, and that anon,
This was my sweven, now it is done.

EXPLICIT.

THE HOUSE OF FAME.

In this booke is shewed how the deedes of all men and women, be they good or bad, are carried by report to posteritie

B. I. v. 1—108

God tourne us every dream to good,
For it is wonder thing, by the rood,
To my wit, what causeth swevens
On the morrow, or on evens,
And why the effect followeth of some,
And of some it shal never come,
Why that it is an avision,
And why this is a revelation,
Why this a dreame, why that a sweven,
And not to every man liche even;
Why this a fantome, why that oracles;
I n'ot; but whoso of these miracles
The causes know bet than I,
Define he, for I certainely
Ne can hem not, ne never thinke
To busie my wit for to swinke
To know of hir significations
The gendres, ne distinctions
Of the times of hem, ne the causes,
Or why this is more than that is,
Or yeve folkes complexions,
Make hem dreame of reflections,
Or else thus, as other saine,
For the great feeblenesse of hir brain,
By abstinence, or by sicknesse,
Prison, strife, or great distresse,
Or els by disordinaunce,
Or natural accustomaunce,
That some men be too curious
In studie, or melancolious,
Or thus, so inly full of drede,
That no man may him bote rede,
Or els that devotion
Of some, and contemplation
Causen such dreames oft,
Or that the cruell life unsoft
Of hem that loves leden,
Oft hopen much or dreden,
That purely hir impressions
Causen hem to have visions,
Or if spirits han the might
To make folke to dreame on night,
Or if the soule of proper kind
Be so perfite as men find,
That it wote what is to come,
And that he warneth all and some
Of everiche of hir aventures,
By avisions, or by figures,
But that our flesh hath no might
To understand it aright,
For it is warned too derkely,
But why the cause is, not wote I.
Well worth of this thing clerkes
That treaten of that and of other werkes,
For I of none opinion
N'ill as now make mention,
But only that the holy rood
Tourne us every dreame to good,
For never sith I was borne,
Ne no man els me beforne,
Mette, I trow stedfastly,
So wonderfull a dreame as I.
The tenth day now of December,
The which, as I can remember,
I woll you tellen everydele,
But at my beginning, trusteth wele,
I woll make invocation,
With a devout speciall devotion,
Unto the god of sleepe anone,
That dwelleth in a cave of stone,
Upon a streame that commeth fro Lete,
That is a flood of Hell unswete,
Beside a fulke, that men clepe Cimerie,
There slepeth aye this god unmerie,
With his slepie thousand sonnis,
That alway to sleepe hir wonne is;
And to this god that I of rede,
Pray I, that he woll me spede
My sweven for to tell aright,
If every dreame stand in his might,
And he that mover is of all
That is and was, and ever shall,
So give hem joy that it here,
Or all that they dreame to yere,
And for to stand all in grace
Of hir loves, or in what place
That hem were levest for to stonde,
And shield hem from povertie and shonde,
And from every unhappe and disease,
And send hem that may hem please,
That taketh well and scorneth nought,
Ne it misdeme in hir thought,
Through malicious entention,
And who so through presumption,
Or hate, or scorne, or through envie,
Dispite, or jape, or fellonie,
Misdeme it, pray I Jesus good,
Dreame he barefoot, or dreame he shood,
That every harme that any man
Hath had sith the world began,
Befall him thereof, or he sterve,
And graunt that he may it deserve.
Lo, with right such a conclusion,
As had of his avision
Cresus, that was king of Lide,
That high upon a gibbet dide,
This praier shall he have of me,
I am no bette in charite.

Now herken, as I have you saied,
What that I mette or I abraied,
Of December the tenth day,
Whan it was night, to slepe I lay,
Right as I was wont to doone,
And fell asleepe wonder soone,
As he that was weary forgo
On pilgrimage miles two
To the corpes of saint Leonard,
To maken lithe that erst was hard.
But as I slept, me mette I was
Within a temple ymade of glas,
In which there were mo images
Of gold, standing in sundry stages,
In mo rich tabernacles,
And with perrie mo pinacles,
And mo curious portraitures,
And queint manner of figures
Of gold worke than I saw ever.
But certainly I n'ist never
Where that it was, but well wist I,
It was of Venus redely
This temple, for in portreiture
I saw anon right her figure
Naked, fleeting in a see,
And also on her head, parde,
Her rose garland white and red,
And her combe to kembe her hed,
Her doves, and dan Cupido,
Her blind sonne, and Vulcano,
That in his face was full browne.
But as I romed up and downe,
I found that on the wall there was
Thus written on a table of bras.
"I woll now sing, if that I can,
The armes, and also the man,
That first came through his destinie
Fugitife fro Troy the countrie,
Into Itaile, with full much pine,
Unto the stronds of Lavine:"
And tho began the story anone,
As I shall tellen you echone.
First, saw I the destruction
Of Troy, through the Greeke Sinon,
With his false untrue forswearings,
And with his chere and his lesings
Made a horse brought into Troy,
By which Troyans lost all hir joy.
And after this was graved, alas,
How Ilions castle assailed was
And won, and king Priamus slaine,
And Polites his sonne certaine,
Dispitously of dan Pirrus.
And next that saw I how Venus,
Whan that she saw the castle brend,
Downe from Heaven she gan discend,
And bad her sonne Eneas to flee,
And how he fled, and how that he
Escaped was from all the prees,
And tooke his father, old Anchises,
And bare him on his backe away,
Crying "Alas, and welaway!"
The which Anchises in his hand
Bare tho the gods of the land,
Thilke that unbrenned were.
Than saw I next all in fere,
How Crusa, dan Eneas wife,
Whom that he loved all his life,
And her yong sonne Iulo,
And eke Ascanius also,
Fledden eke with drerie chere,
That it was pitie for to here,
And in a forrest as they went,
At a tourning of a went,
How Crusa was ylost, alas!
That rede not I, how that it was,
How he her sought, and how her ghost
Bad him flie the Greekes host,
And said he must into Itaile,
As was his destinie, sauns faile,
That it was pitie for to heare,
Whan her spirit gan appeare,
The words that she to him saied,
And for to keepe her sonne him praied.
There saw I graven eke how he,
His father eke, and his meine,
With his ships gan to saile
Toward the countrey of Itaile,
As streight as they mighten go.
There saw I eke the cruell Juno,
That art dan Jupiters wife,
That hast yhated all thy life
All the Troyan blood,
Ren and cry as thou were wood
On Eolus, the god of winds,
To blowen out of all kinds
So loud, that he should drench
Lord, lady, groome, and wench
Of all the Troyans nation,
Without any of hir salvation.
There saw I such tempest arise,
That every herte might agrise
To see it painted on the wall.
There saw I eke graven withall
Venus, how ye my lady dere,
Weeping with full wofull chere,
Praying Jupiter on hie
To save and keepe that navie
Of that Troyan Eneas,
Sith that he her sonne was.
There saw I Joves Venus kisse,
And graunted was the tempest lisse.
There saw I how the tempest stent,
And how with all pine he went,
And prively tooke a rivage
Into the countrey of Carthage,
And on the morow how that he
And a knight that height Achate,
Metten with Venus that day,
Going in a queint array,
As she had be an hunteresse,
With wind blowing upon her tresse,
And how Eneas began to plaine,
Whan he knew her, of his paine,
And how his ships dreint were,
Or els ylost, he n'ist where;
How she gan him comfort tho,
And bade him to Cartage go,
And there he should his folke find,
That in the sea were left behind,
And shortly of this thing to pace,
She made Eneas so in grace
Of Dido, queene of that countre,
That shortly for to tellen, she
Became his love, and let him do
All that wedding longeth to.
What should I speake it more quaint,
Or paine me my words to paint!
To speake of love, it woll not be,
I cannot of that faculte:

And eke to tellen of the manere
How they first acquainted were,
It were a long processe to tell,
And over long for you to dwell.
  There saw I grave, how Eneas
Told to Dido every caas,
That him was tidde upon the see.
  And eft graven was how that she
Made of him shortly at a word,
Her life, her love, her lust, her lord,
And did to him all reverence,
And laid on him all the dispence,
That any woman might do,
Wening it had all be so,
As he her swore, and hereby demed
That he was good, for he such seemed.
  Alas, what harme doth apparence,
Whan it is false in existence!
For he to her a traitour was,
Wherefore she slow her selfe, alas!
  Lo, how a woman doth amis
To love him that unknowen is,
For by Christ, lo, thus it fareth,
It is not all gold that glareth,
For also brouke I well mine head,
There may be under goodlihead
Covered many a shreud vice,
Therefore, be no wight so nice
To take a love onely for chere,
Or speech, or for friendly manere,
For this shall every woman find,
That some man of his pure kind
Woll shewen outward the fairest,
Till he have caught that what him lest,
And than woll he causes find,
And swere how she is unkind,
Or false, or privie, or double was,
All this say I by Eneas
And Dido, and her nice lest,
That loved all to soone a guest;
Wherefore, I woll say o proverbe,
That he that fully knoweth the herbe,
May safely lay it to his eie,
Withouten drede this is no lie.
  But let us speake of Eneas,
How he betraied her, alas,
And left her full unkindly.
  So whan she saw all utterly,
That he would her of trouth faile,
And wenden from her into Itaile,
She gan to wring her handes two.
  "Alas," (quod she) "that me is wo!
Alas, is every man thus true,
That every yere woll have a new,
If it so long time endure,
Or els three paraventure,
And thus of one he woll have fame
In magnifying of his owne name,
Another for friendship sayeth he,
And yet there shall the third be,
That is taken for delite,
Lo, or els for singular profite:"
In such words gan complaine
Dido of her great paine,
As me mette dreaming readily,
None other authour alledge woll I.
  "Alas," (quod she) "my sweet herte,
Have pitie on my sorrowes smart,
And slee me not, go not away
  "O wofull Dido, welaway!"
(Quod she) unto her selfe tho:
"O Eneas, what woll ye do?
O that your love ne your bond,
That ye swore with your right hond,
Ne my cruell death" (quod she)
"May hold you still here with me!
  "O, have ye of my death no pite?
Ywis mine owne deare herte ye
Know full well that never yet,
As farre as ever I had wit,
Agilt you in thought ne in dede.
  "O, have ye men such goodlihede
In speech, and never a dele of trouth?
Alas, that ever had routh
Any woman on a false man!
  "Now I see well, and tell can,
We wretched women can no art,
For certaine, for the more part;
Thus we been served everichone;
How sore that ye men can grone,
Anon, as we have you received,
Certainly we been deceived,
For though your love last a season,
Wait upon the conclusion,
And eke how ye determine,
And for the more part define,
O welaway, that I was borne!
For through you my name is lorne,
And mine actes redde and song
Over all this land in every tong.
  "O wicked Fame! for there n'is
Nothing so swift lo, as she is,
O sooth is, every thing is wist,
Though it be coverde with the mist,
Eke though I might duren ever,
That I have done recover I never,
That it ne shall be said, alas,
I shamed was through Eneas,
And that I shall thus judged be:
  "'Lo, right as she hath done, now she
Woll done eftsoones hardely,'
Thus say the people prively."
But that is done, n'is not to done,
But all her complaint ne her mone
Certaine availeth her not a stre,
And whan she wist soothly he
Was forth into his ship agone,
She into chamber went anone,
And called on her suster Anne,
And gan her to complaine than,
And said, that she cause was
That she first loved him, alas,
And first counsailed her thereto.
But what, whan this was said and do,
She rofte her selven to the herte,
And deide through the wounds smart:
But all the manner how she deide
And all the words how she seide,
Who so to know it hath purpose,
Rede Virgile in Eneidos,
Or the Pistels of Ovide,
What that she wrote or that she dide,
And nere it too long to endite,
By God, I would it here write.
But welaway, the harme and routh
That hath betide for such untrouth,
As men may oft in bookes rede,
And all day seene it yet in dede,
That for to thinken it tene is.
  Lo, Demophon, duke of Athenis,

How he forswore him falsely,
And 'traied Phillis wickedly,
That kings doughter was of Thrace,
And falsely gan his tearme pace,
And whan she wist that he was false,
She hong her selfe right by the halse,
For he had done her such untrouth,
Lo, was not this a wo and routh!
Eke, looke, how false and recheles
Was to Briseida Achilles,
And Paris to Oenone,
And Jason to Hipsiphile,
And eft Jason to Medea,
And Hercules to Dianira,
For he left her for Iolee,
That made him take his death, parde.
How false was eke Theseus,
That as the storie telleth us,
How he betraied Adriane,
The devill be his soules bane,
For had he laughed or yloured,
He must have been all devoured,
If Adriane ne had be,
And, for she had of him pite,
She made him fro the death escape,
And he made her a full false jape,
For after this within a while,
He left her sleeping in an isle,
Desart alone right in the see,
And stale away, and let her bee,
And tooke hir suster Phedra tho
With him and gan to ship go,
And yet he had sworne to here,
On all that ever he could swere,
That so she saved him his life,
He would taken her to his wife,
For she desired nothing els,
In certaine, as the booke us tels.
But for to excuse this Eneas
Fulliche of all his great trespas,
The booke saith, sauns faile,
The gods bad him go to Itaile,
And leaven Affrickes regioun
And faire Dido and her toun.
Tho saw I grave how to Itaile
Dan Eneas gan for to saile,
And how the tempest all began,
And how he lost his steresman,
Which that the sterne, or he tooke keepe,
Smote over the bord as he sleepe.
And also saugh I how Sibile
And Eneas beside an isle,
To Hell went for to see
His father Anchises the free,
And how he there found Palinurus,
And also Dido, and Deiphebus,
And everiche tourment eke in Hell
Saw he, which long is for to tell,
Which paines who so list to know,
He must rede many a row
In Vergile or in Claudian,
Or Dante, that it tellen can.
Tho saw I eke, all the arivaile
That Eneas had made in Itaile,
And with king Latin his treate,
And all the battailes that he
Was at himselfe and his knights,
Or he had all ywonne his rights,
And how he Turnus reft his life,
And wan Lavinia to his wife,
And all the marvellous signals
Of the gods celestials,
How maugre Juno, Eneas,
For all her sleight and her compas,
Acheved all his aventure,
For Jupiter tooke on him cure,
At the prayer of Venus,
Which I pray alway save us,
And us aye of our sorrowes light.
Whan I had seene all this sight
In this noble temple thus,
"Hey, lord," thought I, "that madest us,
Yet saw I never such noblesse
Of images, nor such richesse
As I see graven in this church,
But nought wote I who did hem worch,
Ne where I am, ne in what countree,
But now will I out gone and see
Right at the wicket if I can
Seene ought where sterring any man,
That may me tellen where I am."
Whan I out of the dore came,
I fast about me beheld,
Than saw I but a large field,
As farre as ever I might see,
Without toune, house, or tree,
Or bush, or grasse, or eared land,
For all the field was but of sand,
As small as men may see at eye
In the desart of Lybye,
Ne no manner creature,
That is yformed by nature,
Ne saw I, me to rede or wisse:
"O Christ," thought I, "that are in blisse,
From fantome and illusion
Me save," and with devotion
Mine eyen to the Heaven I cast,
Tho was I ware, lo, at the last,
That fast by the Sunne on hye,
As kenne might I with mine eye,
Me thought I saw an egle sore,
But that it seemed much more
Than I had any egle ysein;
This is as sooth as death certain,
It was of gold, and shone so bright,
That never saw men such a sight,
But if the Heaven had ywonne
All new of God another sonne,
So shone the egles fethers bright,
And somewhat downward gan it light.

EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS.

LIBER SECUNDUS.

B. II. V. 1—10

Now hearken every manner man
That English understand can,
And listeth of my dreame to here,
For nowe at erst shall ye lere
So sely and so dredefull a vision,
That I say neither Scipion,
Ne king Nabugodonosore,
Pharao, Turnus, ne Alcanore,
Ne metten such a dreame as this,
Now faire blisfull, O Cipris,

So be my favour at this time,
That ye me t'endite and rime
Helpeth, that in Pernaso dwell
Beside Elicon the clere well.
O thought, that wrote all that I met,
And in the tresorie it set
Of my braine, now shall men see
If any vertue in thee bee,
To tell all my dreame aright;
Now kithe thy engine and thy might!
This egle of which I have you told,
That with feathers shone all of gold,
Which that so high gan to sore,
I gan behold more and more,
To seene her beauty and the wonder
But never was that dent of thunder,
Ne that thing that men call soudre,
That smite sometime a toure to poudre,
And in his swift comming brend,
That so swithe gan downward discend,
As this foule, whan it beheld
That I a roume was in the field,
And with his grim pawes strong,
Within his sharpe nailes long,
Me fleyng at a swappe he hent,
And with his sours againe up went,
Me carying in his clawes starke,
As lightly as I had ben a larke,
How high I cannot tellen you,
For I came up I n'ist never how,
For so astonied and asweved
Was every virtue in my heved,
What with his sours and my dread,
That all my feeling gan to dead,
For why! it was a great affray.
Thus I long in his clawes lay,
Till at the last he to me spake
In mans voice, and said "Awake,
And be not agast so for shame,"
And called me tho by my name,
And, for I should better abraid,
Me to awake thus he said,
Right in the same voice and stevin,
That useth one that I can nevin,
And with that voice, sooth to saine,
My mind came to me again,
For it was goodly said to me,
So nas it never wont to be;
And, herewithal, I gan to stere,
As he me in his feet bere,
Till that he felt that I had heat,
And felt eke tho mine herte beat,
And tho gan he me to disport,
And with gentle wordes me comfort,
And said twice, "Saint Mary,
Thou art a noyous thing to cary,
And nothing needeth it, parde,
For also, wise God helpe me,
As thou no harme shalt have of this,
And this case that betiddeth thee is
For thy lore and for thy prow;
Let see, darst thou looke yet now!
Be full ensured boldely,
I am thy friend:" and therewith I
Gan for to wonder in my mind.
O God," quod I: "that madest all kind,
Shall I none otherwise die,
Whether Jove will me stellifie,
Or what thing may this signifie!
I am neither Enocke, ne Helie,
Ne Romulus, ne Ganimede,
That were bore up, as men rede,
To Heaven with dan Jupiter,
And made the gods boteler:"
Lo, this was tho my fantasie,
But he that bare gan aspie
That I so thought, and said this,
"Thou deemest of thy selfe amis,
For Jove is not thereabout,
I dare thee put full out of doubt,
To make of the yet a sterre,
But ere I beare thee much ferre,
I will thee tell what I am,
And whider thou shalt, and why I came
To do this, so that thou take
Good herte, and not for feare quake."
"Gladly," quod I: "Now well," quod he:
"First, I that in my feet have the,
Of whom thou hast feare and wonder,
I am dwelling with the god of thonder,
Which men callen Jupiter,
That doth me flien full oft fer,
To do all his commaundement,
And for this cause he hath me sent
To thee: herke now by thy trouth,
Certaine he hath of thee routh,
That thou hast so truely
Long served ententifely
His blind nevew Cupido,
And faire Venus also,
Without guerdon ever yet,
And nathelesse hast set thy wit,
Although in thy head full little is,
To make bookes, songs, and dities
In rime, or else in cadence,
As thou best canst, in reverence
Of Love, and of his servaunts eke,
That have his service sought and seke,
And painest thee to praise his art,
Although thou haddest never part,
Wherefore also, God me blesse,
Jovis halt it great humblesse,
And vertue eke, that thou wilt make
A night full oft thine head to ake,
In thy study so thou writest,
And evermore of Love enditest,
In honour of him and praisings,
And in his folkes furtherings,
And in hir matter all devisest,
And not him ne his folke dispisest,
Although thou maist go in the daunce
Of hem that him list not avaunce;
Wherefore, as I said ywis,
Jupiter considreth well this,
And also beausire, of other things,
That is, thou haste no tidings
Of Loves folke, if they be glade,
Ne of nothing else that God made
And not onely fro ferre countree
That no tidings commen to thee,
Not of thy very neighbours,
That dwellen almost at thy dores,
Thou hearest neither that ne this,
For whan thy labour all done is,
And hast made all thy reckenings,
In stead of rest and of new things,
Thou goest home to thine house anone,
And also dombe as a stone
Thou sittest at another booke,
Till fully dased is thy looke,

And livest thus as an hermite,
Although thine abstinence is lite,
And therfore Jovis, through his grace,
Will that I beare thee to a place
Which that hight the House of Fame,
And to do the sport and game
In some recompensation
Of thy labour and devotion
That thou hast had, lo, causelesse,
To god Cupido the rechelesse;
And thus this god through his merite
Will with some manner thing thee quite,
So that thou wilt be of good chere,
For trust well that thou shalt here,
When we ben commen there as I say,
Mo wonder things dare I lay,
And of Loves folke mo tidings,
Both soothsawes and lesings,
And mo loves new begon,
And long served till love is won,
And mo lovers casuelly,
That ben betide, no man wote why,
But as a blind man starteth an hare,
And more jolite and welfare,
While they find love of stele,
As thinke men, and over all wele,
Mo discords, and mo jealousies,
Mo murmures, and mo novelries,
And also mo dissimulations,
And eke fained reparations,
And mo berdes in two houres
Without rasour or sisours
Ymade, than graines be of sands,
And eke mo holding in mo hands,
And also mo renovelaunces
Of old forleten acqueintaunces,
Mo love-daies, and mo accords
Than on instruments ben cords,
And eke of love mo exchaunges,
Than ever corne were in graunges,
Unneth maiest thou trowen this,"
Quod he. "No, so helpe me God as wis,"
Quod I. "Now why?" quod he. "For it
Were impossible to my wit,
Though Fame had all the pries
In all a realme and all aspies,
How that yet he should heare all this,
Or they espien:"—"O yes, yes,"
Quod he, to me, "that can I preve
By reason, worthy for to leve,
So that thou give thine advertence
To understand my sentence.
"First shalt thou here where she dwelleth,
Right so as thine owne booke telleth,
Her palais standeth, as I shall say,
Right even amiddes of the way
Betweene Heaven, Earth, and see,
That whatsoever in all these three
Is spoken in prive or apert,
The way thereto is so overt,
And stant eke in so just a place,
That every sowne mote to it pace,
Or what so commeth from any tong,
Be rowned, red, or song,
Or spoken in suertie or drede,
Certaine it mote thider nede.
"Now hearken well, for why? I will
Tellen thee a proper skill,
And a worthy demonstration
In mine imagination.
"Geffray, thou wotest well this,
That every kindely thing that is,
Hath a kindely stede there he
May best in it conserved be,
Unto which place every thing,
Through his kindely enclining,
Meveth for to come to,
Whan that it is away therefro,
As thus, lo, how thou maist al day see,
Take any thing that heavie bee,
As stone or lead, or thing of weight,
And beare it never so hie on height,
Let go thine hand, it falleth downe,
Right so say I by fire or sowne
Or smoke, or other things light,
Alway they seeke upward on height,
Light things up, and downward charge,
While everich of hem be at large,
And for this cause thou maist well see,
That every river unto the see
Enclined is to go by kind,
And by these skilles, as I find,
Have fishes dwelling in flood and see,
And trees eke on the earth be;
Thus every thing by his reason
Hath his own proper mansion,
To which he seeketh to repaire,
There as it should nat appaire.
"Lo, this sentence is knowne couth
Of every philosophers mouth,
As Aristotle and dan Platone,
And other clerkes many one,
And to confirme my reasoun,
Thou wost well that speech is soun,
Or else no man might it here,
Now herke what I woll thee lere.
"Sowne is not but eyre ybroken,
And every speech that is spoken,
Loud or prive, foule or faire,
In his substaunce is but eyre,
For as flame is but lighted smoke,
Right so is sowne eyre ybroke,
But this may be in many wise,
Of which I will thee devise;
As sowne commeth of pipe or harpe
For when a pipe is blowen sharpe,
The eyre is twist with violence,
And rent; lo, this is my sentence:
Eke, whan men harpe strings smite,
Wheder it be much or lite,
Lo, with a stroke the eyre it breketh,
And right so breaketh it whan men speaketh,
Thus, wost thou well, what thing is speach,
Now henceforth, I will thee teach
How everich speech, voice, or soun,
Through his multiplicatioun,
Though it were piped of a mouse,
Mote needs come to Fames House;
I prove it thus, take heed now
By experience, for if that thou
Threw in a water now, a stone,
Well wost thou it will make, anone,
A little roundell as a circle,
Paraventure as broad as a covercle,
And right anone, thou shalt see wele,
That whelo cercle wil cause another whele,
And that the third, and so forth brother,
Every cercle causing other,
Broader than himselfe was,
And thus from roundell to compas,

Ech about other going,
Causeth of others stering
And multiplying evermo,
Til it be so farre go
That it at both brinkes bee,
Although thou may it not see
Above, yet gothe it alway under,
Though thou thinke it a great wonder,
And who so saith of trouth I vary,
Bid him prove the contrary;
And right thus every word ywis,
That loud or privie yspoken is,
Moveth first an eyre about,
And of his moving, out of dout,
Another eyre anone is moved;
As I have of the water proved,
That every cercle causeth other,
Right so of eyre, my leve brother;
Everich eyre in other stereth
More and more, and speech up beareth,
Or voice of noise, word or soun,
Aye through multiplication,
Till it be at the House of Fame;
Take it in earnest or in game,
Now have I told, if thou have mind,
How speech or sowne, of pure kind
Enclined is upward to meve;
This maiest thou fele well by preve,
And that same stede ywis,
That every thing enclined to is,
Hath his kindliche stede,
That sheweth it without drede,
That kindely the mansioun
Of everich speeche of every soun,
Be it either foule or faire,
Hath his kind place in aire,
And sith that every thing ywis,
Out of his kind place ywis,
Moveth thider for to go,
If it away be therefro,
As I have before proved thee,
It sheweth every soune, parde,
Moveth kindely to pace,
As up into his kind place;
And this place of which I tell,
There as Fame list to dwell,
It sette amiddes of these three,
Heaven, Earth, and eke the see,
As most conservatife the soun;
Than is this the conclusion,
That every speech of every man,
As I thee tell first began,
Moveth up on height to pace
Kindly to Fames place.
"Tell me this now faithfully,
Have I not proved thus simply,
Without any subtelte
Of speech, or great prolixite
Of termes of philosophy,
Of figures of poetry,
Or colours of rhetorike?
Perde, it ought thee to like,
For hard language, and hard matere
Is incombrous for to here
At ones, wost thou not well this?"
And I answered and said "Yes."
"Ah, ah," quod he, "lo, so I can,
Leudly unto a leud man
Speke, and shew him such skilles,
That he may shake hem by the billes,
So palpable they shoulden be;
But tel me this now pray I thee,
How thinketh thee my conclusioun?"
"A good persuasion,"
Quod I, "it is, and lyke to be,
Right so as thou hast proved me,"
"By God," quod he, "and as I leve,
Thou shalt have it or it be eve,
Of every word of this sentence,
A profe by experience,
And with thine eares hearen well
Toppe and taile, and everidell,
That every word that spoken is,
Commeth into Fames House ywis,
As I have said, what wilt thou more?"
And with this word upper to sore,
He began and said, "By saint Jame,
Now will we speake all of game.
How farest thou now?" quod he, to me.
"Well," quod I. "Now see," quod he,
"By thy trouth, yond adowne,
Where that thou knowest any towne,
Or house, or any other thing,
And whan thou hast of ought knowing,
Look that thou warne me,
And I anon shall tell thee
How farre that thou art now therefro."
And I adowne gan to loken tho,
And beheld fields and plaines,
Now hils, and now mountaines,
Now valeis, and now forests,
And now unneth great beests,
Now rivers, now citees,
Now townes, now great trees,
Now shippes sayling in the see.
But thus soone in a while hee,
Was flowen fro the ground so hye,
That all the world, as to mine eye,
No more seemed than a pricke,
Or else was the eyre so thicke
That I might it not discerne:
With that he spake to me so yerne,
And said: "Seest thou any token,
Or ought that in this world of spoken?"
I said "Nay."—"No wonder is,"
Quod he, "for never halfe so hye as this,
N'as Alexander of Macedon
King, ne of Rome dan Scipion,
That saw in dreame at point devise,
Heaven and Earth, Hell and Paradise,
Ne eke the wretch Dedalus,
Ne his childe nice Icharus,
That flewe so hie that the hete
His wyngs molte, and he fell wete
In midde the sea, and there he dreint,
For whom was made a great complaint.
"Now tourne upward," quod he, "thy face,
And behold this large place,
This eyre, but looke that thou no bee
Adrad of hem that thou shalt see,
For in this regioun certayne,
Dwelleth many a citezeine,
Of which speaketh dan Plato,
These ben the eyrishe beests, lo."
And tho sawe I all the menie,
Both gone and also flie.
"Lo, quod he, cast up thyne eye,
See yonder lo, the galaxie,
The which men clepe the milky way,
For it is white: and some, parfay,

Callen it Watling streete,
That ones was brent with the hete,
When the Sunnes sonne the rede,
That hight Pheton, would lede
Algate his fathers cart, and gie.
"The cart horse gan well aspie,
That he coud no governaunce,
And gan for to leape and praunce,
And beare him up, and now doun,
Till he saw the Scorpioun,
Which that in Heaven a signe is yet,
And he for fere lost his wit
Of that, and let the reynes gone
Of his horse, and they anone,
Soon up to mount and downe discende,
Till both eyre and Earth brende,
Till Jupiter, lo, at the last,
Him slew and fro the carte cast.
"Lo, is it not a great mischaunce
To let a foole have governaunce
Of things that he cannot demaine?"
And with his word, sothe for to saine,
He gan alway upper to sore,
And gladded me than more and more.
So faithfully to me spake he.
Tho gan I to looke under me,
And beheld the eyrish beests,
Cloudes, mistes, and tempests,
Snowes, hayles, raynes, and windes,
And than gendring in hir kindes,
All the way through which I came;
"O God," quod I, "that made Adame,
Moch is thy might and nobles!"
And tho thought I upon Boece,
That writeth a thought may flie so hie
With fethers of philosophy
To passen everich element,
And when he hath so far ywent,
Than may be seen behind his backe,
Cloude, and earth, and all that I of spake.
Tho gan I wexe in a were,
And said, "I wote well I am here,
But whether in body or in goost,
I n'ot ywis, but God thou woost;"
For more clere entendement,
N'as me never yet ysent;
And than thought I on Marcian,
And eke of Anticlaudian,
That sothe was hir descripcion
Of all the Heavens region,
As far as that I saw the preve,
And, therefore, I can hem leve.
With that the egle gan to crie,
"Let be," quod he, "thy fantasie,
Wilt thou learne of sterres ought?"
"Nay certainly," quod I, "right nought."
"And why?" quod he. "For I am old."
"Or els would I thee have told,"
Quod he, "the sterres names, lo,
And all the Heavens signs to,
And which they be."—"No force," quod I.
"Yes, parde," quod he, "wost thou why?
For whan thou redest poetry,
How the goddes can stellify
Birde, fishe, or him, or her,
As the ravin and other,
Or Ariones harpe fine,
Castor, Polexe, or Delphine,
Or Athalantes doughters seven,
How all these are set in Heven,
For though thou have hem ofte in hand,
Yet n'ost thou nat where they stand."
"No force," quod I, "it is no need,
As well I leve, so God me speed,
Hem that writen of this matere,
As though I knew hir places here,
And eke they semen here so bright,
It should shenden all my sight,
To look on hem:"—"That may well be,"
Quod he, and so forth bare he me
A while, and tho he gan to cry,
(That never herde I thing so hie)
"Hold up thy thine heed, for all is well,
Saint Julian, lo, bonne hostell,
See here the House of Fame, lo,
Mayst thou not here that I do?"
"What?" quod I. "The great sowne"
Quod he, "that rombleth up and downe
In Fames House full of tidings,
Both of fayre speech and chidings,
And of false and sothe compouned,
Herken well, it is not rowned.
Herest thou not the great swough?"
"Yes, perde," quod I, "wel ynough.
"And what sowne is it like?" quod he.
"Parde, lyke the beating of the see,"
Quod I, "against the roches holow,
Whan tempests done her shippes swolow,
And that a man stand out of doute,
A myle thens, and here it route.
"Or els lyke the humbling
After the clappe of a thundring,
When Jovis hath the eyre ybete,
But it doth me for feare swete."
"Nay, drede thee not thereof," quod he,
"It is nothing that will biten thee,
Thou shalt have no harme truely."
And with that worde both he and I
As nigh the place arrived were,
As men might cast with a spere,
I n'ist how, but in a strete
He set me faire on my feete,
And said, "Walke forth a pace
And telle thine adventure and case,
That thou shalt finde in Fames place."
"Now," quod I, "while we have space
To speake, or that I go fro thee,
For the love of God tell me,
In sothe, that I will of thee lere,
If this noyse that I here
Be as I have herde thee tell,
Of folke that done in earth dwell,
And commeth here in the same wise,
As I thee herd or this devise,
And that here lives body n'is
In all that house that yonder is,
That maketh all this loude fare."
"No," quod he, "by saint Clare,
And also wisse God rede me,
But o thing I will warne thee,
Of the which thou wilt have wonder.
"Lo, to the House of Fame yonder,
Thou woste how commeth every speach,
It needeth not the efte to teach,
But understand now right well this,
When any speach ycomen is,
Up to the palais anone right,
It wexeth like the same wight,
Which that the worde in earth spake,
Be he clothed in reed or blake,

And hath so very his likenesse,
And spake the worde that thou wilt gesse,
That it the same body be,
Man or woman, he, or she.
And is not this a wonder thing?"
"Yes," quod I tho, "by Heaven king:"
And with this worde, "Farewell," quod he,
"And here will I abide thee,
And God of Heaven send thee grace
Some good to learne in this place:"
And I of him tooke leave anone,
And gan forth to the palais gone.

EXPLICIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

LIBER TERTIUS.

B. III. V. 1—118

GOD of science and of light,
Apollo, through thy great might,
This littell last booke now thou gie,
Now that I will for maistrie
Here art potenciall be shewde,
But for the rime is light and lewde,
Yet make it somewhat agreeable,
Though some verse fayle in a sillable,
And that I do no diligence,
To shewe crafte, but sentence,
And if devine vertue thou
Wilt helpe me to shewe now,
That in my heed ymarked is,
Lo, that is for to meanen this,
The House of Fame for to discrive,
Thou shalt see me go as blive
Unto the next laurer I see,
And kisse it, for it is thy tree;
Now entre in my brest, anone!
When I was from the Egle gone,
I gan behold upon this place,
And certaine, or I further passe,
I woll you all the shape devise,
Of house and citee, and all the wise
How I gan to this place approche,
That stood upon so hie a roche,
Hier standeth none in Spaine;
But up I clambe with moch payne,
And though to climbe greved mee,
Yet I ententife was to see,
And for to poren wondre low,
If I coude any wise yknow
What maner stone this roche was,
For it was like a limed glas,
But that it shone full more clere,
But of what congeled matere
It was, I n'iste redely,
But at the last espied I,
And found that it was everydele,
A roche of yse and not of stele:
Thought I, "By saint Thomas of Kent,
This were a feeble foundement
To builden on a place hie,
He ought him little to glorifie,
That hereon bilte, God so me save."
Tho sawe I all the hall ygrave
With famous folkes names fele,
That had been in moch wele,
And hir fames wide yblow,
But well unneth might I know
Any letters for to rede
Hir names by, for, out of drede,
They weren almost of thawed so,
That of the letters one or two
Were molte away of every name,
So unfamous was wexe her fame;
But men say, what may ever last?
Tho gan I in mine herte cast,
That they were molte away for heate,
And not away with stormes beate,
For on that other side I sey,
Of this hill, that northward ley,
How it was written full of names
Of folke that had afore great fames,
Of old time, and yet they were
As fresh as men had written hem there
The self-day, or that houre
That I on hem gan to poure,
But well I wiste what it made,
It was conserved with the shade,
All the writing that I sie,
Of a castell that so stoode on hie,
And stoode eke in so cold a place
That heate might it not deface.
Tho gan I on this hill to gone,
And found on the coppe a wone,
That all the men that been on live
Ne han the conning to discrive
The beaute of that ilke place,
Ne coud caste no compace
Soch another for to make,
That might of beauty be his make,
Ne so wonderly ywrought,
That it astonieth yet my thought,
And maketh all my witte to swinke
On this castell for to thinke,
So that the great beautie,
The caste, crafte, and curiositie,
Ne can I not to you devise,
My witte ne may me not suffise;
But nathelesse all the substaunce
I have yet in my remembraunce,
For why? me thought, by saint Gile,
All was of stone of berile,
Both the castell and the toure,
And eke the hall, and every boure,
Without peeces or joynings,
But many subtell compassings,
As babeuries and pinnacles,
Imageries and tabernacles,
I saw, and full eke of windowes,
As flakes fallen in great snowes;
And eke in each of the pinnacles
Weren sundry habitacles,
In which stooden, all withouten,
Full the castle all abouten,
Of all manner of minstrales,
And jestours, that tellen tales
Both of weeping and of game;
And of all that longeth unto Fame,
There heard I play on an harpe,
That souned both well and sharpe,
Him Orpheus full craftely,
And on this side, fast by,
Sat the harper Orion,
And Gacides Chirion,
And other harpers many one,
And the Briton Glaskirion,

And smale harpers with hir glees,
Sate under hem in divers sees,
And gone on hem upward to gape,
And counterfeited hem as an ape,
Or as craft counterfeit kind.
Tho saw I standen hem behind,
A farre from hem, all by hemselve,
Many a thousand times twelve,
That made loud minstralcies,
In cornemuse and shalmies,
And many another pipe,
That craftely began to pipe,
Both in douced and in rede,
That ben at feasts with the brede,
And many a floyte and litling horne,
And pipes made of greene corne,
As have these little heerd gromes,
That keepen beastes in the bromes.
There saw I than dan Citherus,
And of Athenes dan Proserus,
And Mercia that lost her skinne,
Both in face, body, and chinne,
For that she would envien, lo,
To pipen bette than Apollo.
There saw I eke famous old and yong,
Pipers of all the Dutch tong,
To learne love daunces, springs,
Reyes, and the straunge things.
Tho saw I in another place,
Standing in a large space
Of hem that maken bloody soun,
In trumpe beme, and clarioun,
For in fight and bloodsheddings
Is used gladly clarionings.
There heard I trumpe Messenus,
Of whom that speaketh Vergilius.
There heard I Joab trumpe also,
Theodomas, and other mo,
And all that used clarion,
In Casteloigne and Aragon,
That in hir times famous were,
To learnen saw I trumpen there
There saw I sit in other sees,
Playing upon other sundry glees,
Which that I cannot neven,
Mo than sterres ben in Heven,
Of which I n'ill as now not rime,
For ease of you, and losse of time:
For time ylost, this know ye,
By no way may recovered be.
There saw I playing jogelours,
Magiciens, and tragetours,
And phetonisses, charmeresses,
Old witches, sorceresses,
That usen exorsisations,
And eke subfumigations,
And clerkes eke, which conne well
All this magike naturell,
That craftely doe hir entents
To maken in certaine ascendents,
Images, lo, through which magike
To maken a man ben hole or sike.
There saw I the queene Medea,
And Circes eke, and Calipsea.
There saw I Hermes Ballenus,
Limote, and eke Simon Magus.
There saw I, and knew by name,
That by such art done men have fame.
There saw I Coll Tragetour
Upon a table of sicamour
Play an uncouth thing to tell,
I saw him carry a wind-mell
Under a walnote shale.
What should I make lenger tale?
Of all the people that I sey,
I could not tell till domisdey.
Whan I had all this folke behold,
And found me loose and not hold,
And I amused a long while
Upon this wall of berile,
That shone lighter than a glas
And made well more than it was,
As kinde thing of fame is,
And than anone, after this,
I gan forth romen till I fonde
The castell yate on my right honde,
Which so well corven was,
That never such another n'as,
And yet it was by aventure
Ywrought by great and subtill cure;
It needeth not you more to tellen
To make you too long dwellen
Of these yates florishings,
Ne of compaces, ne of karvings,
Ne how the hacking in masonries,
As corbettes, and imageries.
But Lord, so faire it was to shewe,
For it was all with gold behewe;
But in I went, and that anone,
There met I crying many one,
"A larges, a larges, hold up well!
God save the lady of this pell,
Our owne gentill lady Fame,
And hem that willen to have a name
Of us!" thus heard I crien all,
And fast commen out of the hall,
And shoke nobles and starlings,
And crowned were as kings,
With crownes wrought full of losinges,
And many ribans, and many fringes
Wore on hir clothes truely.
Tho at the last, espied I
That pursevauntes and heraudes,
That crien riche folkes laudes,
It weren, all and every man
Of hem, as I you tell can,
Had on him throwe a vesture
Which men clepe a coate armure,
Embroudred wonderly riche,
As though they were not yliche,
But nought will I, so mote I thrive,
Be about to discrive
All these armes that there weren,
That they thus on hir coates weren,
For to me were impossible,
Men might make of hem a bible,
Twenty foote thicke as I trowe,
For certain who so coud know,
Might there all the armes seen
Of famous folke that had been
In Affrike, Europe, and Asie,
Sith first began chevalrie.
Lo, how should I now tell all this?
Ne of the hall, eke what need is
To tellen you that every wall
Of it, and rofe and flore with all,
Was plated halfe a foote thicke
Of golde, and that n'as not wicke,
But for to prove in all wise,
As fine as ducket in Venise,

Of which to lite all in my pouche is,
And they were set as thicke of ouches
Fine, of the finest stones faire,
That men reden in the lapidaire,
Or as grasses growen in a mede,
But it were all to long to rede
The names, and therefore I pace,
But in this lustie and riche place,
That Fames hall called was,
Full moch prees of folke there n'as,
Ne crouding, for to moch prees,
But all on hie above a dees,
Satte in a see imperiall,
That made was of rubie royall,
Which that a carbuncle is ycalled,
I sawe perpetually ystalled,
A feminine creature,
That never formed by nature
Was such another thing I saie:
For alderfirst, soth to saie,
Me thought that she was so lite,
That the length of a cubite,
Was lenger than she seemed be,
But thus soone in a while she,
Her self tho wonderly streight,
That with her feet she th'erthe reight,
And with her hedde she touched Heaven,
There as shineth the sterres seven,
And thereto yet, as to my wit,
I saw a great wonder yet,
Upon her eyen to behold,
But certainly I hem never told,
For as fele eyen had she,
As fethers upon foules be,
Or weren on the beasts foure,
That Goddes trone can honour,
As writeth John in the Apocalips,
Her heer that was oundie and crips,
As burned gold it shone to see.
And sothe to tellen, also shee
Had also fele up standing eares,
And tonges, as on beast been heares,
And on her feete woxen saw I,
Partriche winges redily.
But Lord the perrie and the richesse
I saw sitting on the goddesse,
And the heavenly melodie
Of songes full of armonie
I heard about her trone ysong,
That all the palais wall rong,
So song the mighty Muse, she
That cleped is Caliope,
And her seven sisterne eke,
That in hir faces seemen meke,
And evermore eternally
They song of Fame, tho heard I,
"Heried be thou and thy name,
Goddes of renoun and of Fame!"
Tho was I ware at the last,
As I mine eyen gan up cast,
That this ilke noble queene,
On her shoulders gan sustene
Both the armes and the name
Of tho that had large fame,
Alisander, and Hercules,
That with a sherte his life did lese,
And thus found I sitting this goddesse,
In noble honour and richesse,
Of which I stinte a while now,
Other thing to tellen you
Tho saw I stande on thother side,
Streight doune to the doores wide,
From the deis many a pillere
Of metall, that shone not full clere,
But though ther were of no richesse,
Yet were they made for great noblesse,
And in hem great sentence,
And folke of hie and digne reverence,
Of which to tell will I fonde.
Upon a piller sawe I stonde,
Alderfirst there I sie,
Upon a piller stonde on hie,
That was of lede and of iron fine,
Him of the secte Saturnine,
The Ebraike Josephus the old,
That of Jewes gestes told,
And he bare on his shulders hie
The fame up of the Jewrie,
And by him stoden other seven,
Wise and worthy for to neven,
To helpen him beare up the charge,
It was so heavy and so large,
And for they written of battailes,
As well as of other marvayles,
Therefore was lo, this pillere,
Of which I you tell here,
Of leade and iron both ywis,
For iron Martes metall is,
Which that god is of battaile,
And the leade withouten faile,
Is lo, the metall of Saturne,
That hath full large whele to turne,
To stand forth on either rowe
Of hem, which I could knowe,
Though I by order hem not tell,
To make you to long to dwell.
These, of which I gan rede,
There saw I stand, out of drede,
Upon an iron piller strong,
That painted was all endlong
With tigres blood in every place,
The Tholason that height Stace,
That bare of Thebes up the name
Upon his shoulders, and the fame
Also of cruell Achilles,
And by him stode, withouten lees,
Full wonder hie upon a piller
Of iron, he the great Omer,
And with him Dares and Titus
Before, and eke he Lollius,
And Guido eke the Colempnis,
And English Galfride eke ywis,
And ech of these, as I have joy,
Was busie to beare up Troy,
So heavy thereof was the fame,
That for to beare it was no game,
But yet I gan full well espie,
Betwene hem was a little envie,
One said that Omer made lies,
Feyning in his poetries,
And was to the Greekes favourable,
Therefore held he it but fable.
Tho saw I stand on a pillere,
That was of tinned iron clere,
The Latine poete Virgile,
That hath bore up a long while
The fame of pius Eneas.
And next him on a piller was,
Of copper, Venus' clerke, Ovide,
That hath sowen wondrous wide

The great god of loves fame,
And there he bare up well his name,
Upon this piller also hie,
As I might see it with mine eye:
For why this hall whereof I rede,
Was woxe on height, length and brede,
Well more by a thousand deale
Than it was erst, that saw I weale.
Tho saw I on a piller by,
Of iron wrought full sternely,
The great poet dan Lucan,
That on his shoulders bare up than,
As hie as that I might see,
The fame of Julius and Pompee,
And by him stoden all these clerkes,
That write of Romes mighty werkes,
That if I would hir names tell,
All to long must I dwell.
And next him on a piller stood,
Of sulphure, liche as he were wood,
Dan Claudian, sothe for to tell
That bare up all the fame of Hell,
Of Pluto, and of Proserpine,
That queene is of the derke pine,
What should I more tell of this?
The hall was all full, ywis,
Of hem that written old jestes,
As been on trees rokes nestes,
But it a full confuse mattere
Were all these jestes for to here,
That they of write, and how they hight.
But while that I beheld this sight,
I herde a noise approchen blive,
That fareth as bees done in an hive,
Ayenst hir time of out flying,
Right soch a maner murmuring,
For all the world it seemed mee.
Tho gan I looke about and see,
That there come entring into the hall
A right great company withall,
And that of sondry regions,
Of all kind of condicions,
That dwell in yearth under the Moone,
Poore and riche; and all so soone
As they were come into the hall,
They gan on knees doune to fall,
Before this ilke noble queene,
And said, "Graunt us lady sheene,
Eche of us of thy grace a bone,"
And some of hem she graunted sone,
And some she warned well and faire,
And some she graunted the contraire
Of hir asking utterly:
But this I say you truely,
What her grace was, I n'ist,
For of these folke full well I wist,
They had good fame eche deserved,
Although they were diversly served,
Right as her sister, dame Fortune,
Is wont to serve in commune.
Now herken how she gan to pay
Hem that gan her of grace pray,
And yet, lo, all this companie
Saiden soth, and not a lie.
"Madame," sayd they, "we bee
Folke that here besechen thee,
That thou graunt us now good fame,
And let our workes have good name,
In full recompensacioun
Of good worke, give us good renoun."
"I warne it you," quod she, "anone,
Ye get of me good fame none,
By God, and therefore go your way."
"Alas," quod they, "and welaway!
Tell us what your cause may be."
"For me list it not," quod she,
"No wight shall speake of you, ywis,
Good ne harme, ne that ne this."
And with that worde she gan to call
Her messenger that was in hall,
And bad that he should faste gone,
Upon paine to be blinde anone,
For Eolus the god of winde,
"In Trace there ye shall him finde,
And bid him bring his clarioun,
That is full divers of his soun,
And it is cleped cleare laude,
With which he wont is to heraude
Hem that me list ypraised bee;
And also bid him how that hee
Bring eke his other clarioun,
That height sclaunder in every toun,
With which he wont is to diffame
Hem that me list, and doe hem shame."
This messenger gan fast to gone,
And found where in a cave of stone,
In a countree that height Trace,
This Eolus with harde grace,
Helde the windes in distresse,
And gan hem under him to presse,
That they gonne as the beres rore,
He bound and pressed hem so sore.
This messenger gan fast crie,
"Rise up," quod he, "and fast thee hie
Till thou at my lady bee,
And take thy clarions eke with thee,
And speed thee fast:" and he, anone,
Tooke to one that hight Tritone,
His clarions to bearen tho,
And let a certaine winde go,
That blewe so hidously and hie,
That it ne left not a skie
And all the welkin long and brode.
This Eolus no where abode,
Till he was come to Fames feete,
And eke the man that Triton heete,
And there he stode as still as stone,
And herewithall, there came anone,
Another huge companie
Of good folke and gan to crie,
"Lady, graunt us now good fame
And let our workes have that name,
Now in honour of gentilnesse,
And also God your soule blesse,
For we han well deserved it,
Therefore is right that we be quit."
"As thrive I," quod she, "ye shall faile,
Good workes shall you not availe,
To have of me good fame as now,
But wote ye what, I graunt you,
That ye shall have a shrewd name,
And wicked loos and worse fame,
Though ye good loos have well deserved,
Now goeth your way for you been served:
And thou dan Eolus," quod she,
"Take forth thy trumpe anone, let see,
That is ycleped sclaunder light,
And blow hir loos, that every wight
Speake of hem harme and shreudnesse,
In stede of good and worthinesse,

For thou shalt trumpe all the contrarie,
Of that they have done well and faire."
Alas, thought I, what aventures
Have these sory creatures,
That they among all the pres,
Should thus be shamed giltles?
But what, it must needes be.
What did this Eolus, but he
Tooke out his blacke trumpe of bras,
That fouler than the Devil was,
And gan this trompe for to blow,
As all the world should overthrow.
Throughout every regioun,
Went this foule trumpes soun,
As swifte as a pellet out of a gonne,
When fire is in the pouder ronne,
And soch a smoke gan out wende,
Out of the foule trumpes ende,
Blacke, blue, grenishe, swartish, red,
As doth where that man melte led,
Lo, all on hie from the tewell;
And thereto, one thing saw I well,
That the ferther that it ranne,
The greater wexen it beganne,
As doth the river from a well,
And it stanke as the pitte of Hell:
Alas, thus was hir shame yrong,
And giltlesse on every tong.
Tho came the third companie,
And gone up to the dees to hie,
And doune on knees they fell anone,
And saiden, "We been everichone
Folke that han full truely
Deserved fame rightfully,
And prayed you it might be know,
Right as it is and forth blow."
"I graunt," quod she, "for now me list
That your good workes shall be wist,
And yet ye shall have better loos,
Right in dispite of all your foos,
Than worthy is, and that anone:
Let now," quod she, "thy trumpe gone,
Thou Eolus that is so blacke,
And out thine other trumpe take
That hight laude, and blow it so
That through the world hir fame go,
All easely and not too fast,
That it be knowen at the last."
"Full gladly, lady mine," he saied,
And out his trumpe of gold he braied
Anone, and set it to his mouth,
And blewe it east, west, and south,
And north, as loude as any thonder,
That every wight hath of it wonder,
So brode it ran or that it stent,
And certes, all the breath that went
Out of his trumpes mouth smelde
As men a potte full of baume helde
Among a basket full of roses,
This favour did he to hir loses.
And right with this I gan espie,
There came the fowerth companie,
But certaine they were wonder fewe,
And gonne to standen on a rewe,
And saiden, "Certes, lady bright,
We have done well with all our might,
But we ne keepe to have fame;
Hide our workes and our name,
For Goddes love, for certes wee
Have surely done it for bountee,
And for no manner other thing."
"I graunt you all your asking,"
Quod she, "let your workes be dedde."
With that about I tourned my hedde,
And sawe anone the fifth rout
That to this lady gan lout,
And doune on knees, anone, to fall,
And to her tho besoughten all,
To hiden hir good workes eke,
And said, they yeve not a leke
For no fame, ne such renoun,
For they for contemplacioun,
And Goddes love had it wrought,
Ne of fame would they nought.
"What!" quod she, "and be ye wood?
And wene ye for to do good,
And for to have of that no fame?
Have ye dispite to have my name?
Nay, ye shall lien everichone:
Blowe thy trumpe and that anone,"
Quod she, "thou Eolus I hote,
And ring these folkes workes by note,
That all the world may of it here:"
And he gan blowe hir loos so cleare
In his golden clarioun,
Through the worlde went the soun,
Also kindly, and eke so soft,
That their fame was blowe aloft.
Tho came the sixt companie,
And gan fast to Fame crie,
Right verely in this manere,
They saiden, "Mercy, lady dere,
To tell certain as it is,
We have done neither that ne this,
But idell all our life hath be,
But nathelesse, yet pray we,
That we may have as good a fame,
And great renome and knowen name,
As they that have do noble jestes,
And acheved all hir questes,
As well of love as other thing,
All was us never broche ne ring,
Ne els what fro women sent,
Ne ones in hir herte yment,
To maken us onely frendly chere,
But mought temen us on bere,
Yet let us to the people seeme
Soch as the world may of us deeme,
That women loven us for wood,
It shall do us as moch good,
And to our herte as moch availe,
The counterpeise, ease, and travaile,
As we had won with labour,
For that is dere bought honour,
At regard of our great ease:
And yet ye must us more please,
Let us be hold eke therto,
Worthy, wise, and good also,
And rich, and happy unto love.
For Goddes love that sitteth above,
Though we may not the body have
Of women, yet so God me save,
Let men glewe on us the name,
Suffiseth that we have the fame."
"I graunt," quod she, "by my trouth,
Now Eolus, withouten slouth,
Take out thy trumpe of gold," quod she,
"And blowe as they have asked me,
That every man wene hem at ease,
Though they go in full badde lease."

This Eolus gan it so blowe,
That through the world it was yknow.
Tho came the seventh route anone,
And fill on knees everichone,
And sayed, "Lady, graunt us soone
The same thing, the same boone,
That this nexte folke have done."
"Fie on you," quod she, "everichone,
Ye nastie swine, ye idle wretches,
Full of rotten slow tetches,
What false theeves where ye wold,
Been famed good, and nothing n'old
Deserve why, ne never thought,
Men rather you to hangen ought,
For ye be like the slepie cat,
That would have fish; but wost thou what?
He woll nothing wette his clawes;
Evil thrifte come to your jawes,
And on mine, if I it graunt,
Or do favour you to avaunt.
"Thou Eolus, thou king of Thrace,
Go blowe this folke a sorie grace,"
Quod she, "anone, and wost thou how,
As I shall tell thee right now,
Say these ben they that would honour
Have, and do no kind labour,
Ne do no good, and yet have laude,
And that men wende that belle Isaude,
Ne coude hem not of love werne,
And yet she that grint at querne,
Is all too good to ease hir herte."
This Eolus anone up sterte,
And with his blacke clarioun
He gan to blasen out a soun,
As loude as belleth winde in Hell,
And eke therewith, sothe to tell,
This sowne was so full of japes
As ever mowes were in apes,
And that went all the world about,
That every wight gan on hem shout,
And for to laugh as they were wood,
Such game found they in hir hood.
Tho came another company,
That had ydone the trechery,
The harme and great wickednesse,
That any herte coulden gesse,
And prayed her to have good fame,
And that she n'olde do hem no shame,
But give hem loos and good renoun,
And do it blowe in clarioun.
"Nay wis," quod she, "it were a vice,
Al be there in me no justice,
Me list not to do it now,
Ne this I n'ill graunt it you."
Tho came there leaping in a rout,
And gan clappen all about,
Every man upon the crowne
That all the hall gan to sowne,
And said, "Lady lefe and dere,
We ben soch folkes as ye may here,
To tell all the tale aright,
We ben shrewes every wight,
And have delite in wickednesse,
As good folke have in goodnesse,
And joy to been knowen shrewes,
And full vice and wicked thewes,
Wherefore we pray you on a rowe,
That our fame be such yknow,
In all things right as it is."
"I graunt it you," quod she, "ywis,
But what art thou that saiest this tale,
That wearest on thy hose a pale,
And on thy tippet soch a bell?"
"Madame," quod he, "sothe to tell,
I am that ilke shrewe ywis,
That brent the temple of Isidis
In Athenes, lo, that citee."
"And wherefore diddest thou so?" quod she.
"By my trouth," quod he, "madame,
I wolde faine have had a name,
As other folke had in the towne,
Although they were of great renowne
For hir vertue and hir thewes,
Thought I, as great fame have shrewes,
(Though it be nought) for shrewdnesse,
As good folke have for goodnesse,
And sithen I may not have that one,
That other n'ill I not forgone,
As for to get a fame here,
The temple set I all on fire.
"Now done our loos be blowe swithe,
As wisely be thou ever blithe."
"Gladly," quod she, "thou Eolus,
Herest thou not what they prayen us?"
"Madame yes, full well," quod he,
"And I will trumpen it, parde:"
And tooke his blacke trumpe fast,
And gan to puffen and to blast,
Till it was at the worlds end.
With that I gan about wend,
For one that stode right at my backe,
Me thought full goodly to me spake,
And said, "Frende, what is thy name?
Arte thou come hider to have fame?"
"Nay forsothe, frende," quod I,
"I come not hither, graunt mercy,
For no soch cause by my heed,
Suffiseth me as I were deed,
That no wight have my name in honde,
I wot my selfe best how I stonde,
For what I drie or what I thinke,
I woll my selfe all it drinke,
Certaine for the more part,
As ferforth as I can mine art."
"What dost thou here than?" quod he:
Quod I, "that woll I tell thee,
The cause why I stand here,
Some new tidings for to lere,
Some new thing, I not what,
Tidings eyther this or that,
Of love, or such things giade,
For certainely he that me made
To come hyder, said to mee
I sholde bothe heare and see,
In this place wonder things,
But these be no soch tidings
As I meant of:"—"No?" quod he:
And I answerde "No, parde,
For well I wote ever yet,
Sith that first I had wit,
That some folke han desired fame,
Diversly, and loos and name,
But certainly I n'ist how,
Ne where that Fame dwelled or now,
Ne eke of her descripcion,
Ne also her condicion,
Ne the order of her dome,
Knew I not till I hider come."
"Why than be, lo, these tidings,
That thou now hether brings,

That thou hast herde," quod he to mee;
"But now, no force, for well I see
What thou desirest for to lere,
Come forth and stande no lenger here,
And I woll thee without drede,
Into soch another place lede,
There thou shalt here many one."
Tho gan I forth with him gone,
Out of the castell, sothe to sey.
Tho sawe I stand in a valey,
Under the castell fast by,
An house, that domus Dedali,
That Laborintus ycleped is,
N'as made so wonderly ywis,
Ne halfe so queintly ywrought,
And evermo, as swift as thought,
This queint house about went,
That nevermo it still stent,
And there came out so great a noise,
That had it stonde upon Oise,
Men might have heard it easily
To Rome, I trowe sikerly,
And the noise which that I herde,
For all the world right so it ferde,
As doth the routing of the stone,
That fro th'engin is letyn gone.
And all this house of which I rede,
Was made of twigges, salow, rede,
And green eke, and some were white,
Such as men to the cages twite,
Or maken of these paniers.
Or els hutches or doffers,
That for the swough and for the twigges,
This house was also full of gigges,
And also full eke of chirkinges,
And of many other werkings,
And eke this house hath of entrees
As many as leves ben on trees,
In sommer whan they been greene,
And on the rofe yet men may seene
A thousand holes, and wel mo,
To letten the sowne out go,
And by day in every tide
Bene all the dores open wide,
And by night eche one unshet,
Ne porter is there none to let
No maner tidings in to pace,
Ne never rest is in that place,
That it n'is filled full of tidings,
Eyther loude or of whisperings,
And ever all the houses angles
Is ful of rownings and of jangles,
Of werres, of peace, of maringes,
Of restes, and of labour, of viages,
Of abode, of death, and of lyfe,
Of love, of hate, accord, of strife,
Of losse, of lore, and of winnings,
Of heale, of sicknesse, or of lesings,
Of faire wether, and eke of tempests,
Of qualme, of folke, and of beests,
Of divers transmutacions,
Of estates and eke of regions,
Of trust, of drede, of jalousie,
Of witte, of winning, of folie,
Of plenty, and of great famine,
Of chepe, derth, and of ruine,
Of good or misgovernment,
Of fire, and of divers accident.
And lo, this house of which I write,
Syker be ye it n'as not lite,
For it was sixtie mile of length,
Al was the timber of no strength,
Yet it is founded to endure,
While that it list to aventure,
That is the mother of tidings,
As the sea of welles and springs,
And it was shaped lyke a cage.
"Certes," quod I, "in all mine age,
Ne saw I soch an house as this."
And as I wondred me, ywis,
Upon this house tho ware was I
How mine egle, fast by,
Was perched hie upon a stone,
And I gan streight to him gone,
And said thus, "I pray thee,
That thou a while abide mee
For goddes love, and let me seene
What wonders in that place bene,
For yet, paraunter, I may lere
Some good therein, or somewhat here,
That lefe me were, or that I went."
"Parde, that is now mine entent,"
Quod he to me, "therefore I dwell,
But certaine one thing I thee tell,
That but I bring thee therin,
Ne shall thou never conne the gin
To come into it out of doubt,
So faste it whirleth, lo, about,
But sith that Joves of his grace,
As I have said, will the solace
Finally with these things,
Uncouth sighes and tidings,
To passe with thine hevinesse,
Soch routh hath he of thy distresse,
That thou suffredest debonairly,
And woste they selven utterly,
Desperate of all blisse,
Sith that fortune hath made a misse,
The swete of all thine hertes rest,
Languish and eke in point to brest,
But he through his mighty merite,
Wil do thee ease, al be it lite,
And gave in expresse commaundement,
To which I am obedient,
To forther thee with all my might,
And wish and teach thee aright,
Where thou maist most tidings here,
Thou shalt here many one lere."
With this word he right anone,
Hent me up bytwene his tone,
And at a window in me brought,
That in this house was at me thought,
And therewithall me thought it stent,
And nothing it about went,
And me set in the floore adoun;
But such a great congregacioun
Of folke as I sawe rome about,
Some within and some without,
N'as never seene, ne shall be efte,
That certes, in this world n'is lefte
So many formed by nature,
Ne need so many a creature,
That wel unneth in that place
Had I a foote brede of space;
And every wight that I sawe there,
Rowned everich in others eere,
A new tiding prively,
Or els he told it all openly
Right thus, and said, "N'ost nat thou
That is betidde, lo, right now!"

"No," quod he, "tell me what:"
And than he told him this and that,
And swore thereto that it was soth,
Thus hath he said, and thus he doth,
And this shal be, and thus herde I say,
That shal be found that dare I lay:
That all the folke that is on live,
Ne have the conning to discrive
Tho thinges that I herde there,
What a loude, and what in eere;
But all the wonder most was this,
Whan one had herd a thing ywis,
He came streight to another wight
And gan him tellen anon right,
The same that him was told
Or it a forlong way was old,
And gan somewhat for to eche
To this tiding in his speche,
More than ever it spoken was,
And nat so sone departed n'as
Tho fro him that he ne mette
With the third, and ere he lette
Any stound he told hym alse,
Where the tidings sothe or false,
Yet wold he tell it natheles,
And evermore with mo encrees,
Than it was erst: thus north and south,
Went every tiding fro mouth to mouth,
And that encreasing evermo,
As fire is wont to quicken and go
From a sparcle sprongen amis,
Till a citie brent up is.
And whan that was full up sprong,
And waxen more on every tonge
Than ever it was, and went anone,
Up to a window out to gone,
Or but it might out there passe,
It gan out crepe at some crevasse,
And flewe forth fast for the nones.
And sometime I saw there at ones,
A leasing and a sadde sothe sawe,
That gonnen of aventure drawe,
Out at a window for to pace,
And whan they metten in that place,
They were achecked both two,
And neyther of them might out go,
For ech other they gonne so croude
Til ech of hem gan crien loude,
"Let me gone first!"—"nay, but let mee!
And here I woll ensuren thee,
With vowes that thou wolt do so,
That I shall never fro thee go,
But be thine owne sworne brother,
We woll meddle us eche in other,
That no man be he never so wrothe,
Shall have one two, but bothe
At ones, as beside his leve,
Come we a morrowe or on eve,
But we cride or still yrowned:"
Thus saw I false and soth compowned.
Togider flie for o tiding.
Thus out at holes gonne wring,
Every tidyng streight to Fame,
And she gan yeve eche his name,
After her disposicion,
And yeve hem eke duracion;
Some to wexe and wane soone,
As doth the faire white Moone,
And let hem gonne, there might I seen
Winged wonders fast fleen,
Twenty thousand in a route
As Eolus hem blewe aboute,
And lord! this house in all times
Was full of shipmen and pilgrimes,
With scrippes bret-full of leasings,
Entermelled with tidings,
And eke alone by hemselve.
O many thousand times twelve
Saw I eke of these pardoners,
Currours, and eke messaungers,
With boxes crommed full of lies
As ever vessell was with lies.
And as I alder-fastest went
About, and did all mine entent,
Me for to playen and for to lere,
And eke a tiding for to here,
That I had herde of some countree
That shall not now be told for mee,
For it no need is, redely
Folke can sing it bet than I,
For al mote out late or rathe,
All the sheves in the lathe.
I herde a great noise withall,
In a corner of the hall;
There men of love tidings told
And I gan thitherward behold,
For I saw renning every wight,
As fast as that they hadden might,
And everich cride, "What thing is that?"
And some said, "I n'ot never what,"
And whan they were all on a hepe,
Tho behind gone up lepe,
And clamben up on other faste,
And up the noyse on highen caste,
And treden fast on others heles,
And stampe as men done after eles.
At the last I saw a man,
Which that I nought ne can,
But he seemed for to be
A man of great auctorite.
And therewithall I abraide
Out of my slepe halfe afraide,
Remembring well what I had sene,
And how hie and ferre I had bene
In my gost, and had great wonder
Of that the god of thonder
Had let me knowen, and began to write
Like as ye have herd me endite,
Wherefore to study and rede alway,
I purpose to do day by day.
Thus in dreaming and in game,
Endeth this litell booke of Fame.

HERE ENDETH THE BOOKE OF FAME.

CHAUCER'S DREAM.

FIRST PRINTED IN 1597.

THAT WHICH HERETOFORE HATH GONE UNDER THE NAME OF HIS DREAM, IS THE BOOKE OF THE DUTCHESSE: OR THE DEATH OF BLANCH, DUTCHESS OF LANCASTER.

v. 1—104

WHAN Flora the queene of pleasaunce,
Had whole achieved thobeisaunce
Of the fresh and new season,
Thorow out every region,
And with her mantle whole covert
That winter made had discovert
Of aventure, withoute light,
In May, I lay upon a night
Alone, and on my lady thought,
And how the lord that her wrought,
Couth well entaile in imagery
And shewed had great maistry,
Whan he in so little space
Made such a body and a face,
So great beaute with swiche features
More than in other creatures;
And in my thoughtes as I lay
In a lodge out of the way,
Beside a well in a forest,
Where after hunting I tooke rest,
Nature and kind so in me wrought,
That halfe on sleepe they me brought,
And gan to dreame to my thinking,
With mind of knowliche like making,
For what I dreamed, as me thought,
I saw it, and I slept nought;
Wherefore is yet my full beleeve,
That some good spirit that eve,
By meane of some curious port,
Bare me, where I saw paine and sport;
But whether it were I woke or slept,
Well wot I of, I lough and wept,
Wherefore I woll in remembraunce,
Put whole the paine, and the pleasaunce,
Which was to me axen and hele,
Would God ye wist it every dele,
Or at the least, ye might o night
Of such another have a sight,
Although it were to you a paine,
Yet on the morow ye would be faine,
And wish it might longe dure;
Than might ye say ye had good cure,
For he that dreames and wenes he see,
Much the better yet may hee
Wite what, and of whom, and where,
And eke the lasse it woll hindere
To thinke I see this with mine eene,
Ywis this may not dreame kene,
But signe or signifiaunce
Of hasty thing sounin pleasaunce,
For on this wise upon a night,
As ye have heard, without light,
Not all waking, ne full on sleepe,
About such houre as lovers weepe
And cry after their ladies grace,
Befell me this wonder cace,
Which ye shall heare and all the wise,
So wholly as I can devise,
In plaine English evill written,
For sleepe writer, well ye witten,
Excused is, though he do mis,
More than one that waking is,
Wherefore here of your gentilnesse,
I you require my boistousnesse
Ye let passe, as thinge rude,
And heareth what I woll conclude;
And of the enditing taketh no heed,
Ne of the tearmes, so God you speed,
But let all passe as nothing were,
For thus befell, as you shall here.
  Within an yle me thought I was,
Where wall and yate was all of glasse,
And so was closed round about
That leavelesse none come in ne out,
Uncouth and straunge to behold,
For every yate of fine gold
A thousand fanes, aie turning,
Entuned had, and briddes singing,
Divers, and on each fane a paire,
With open mouth again thaire;
And of a sute were all the toures,
Subtily corven after floures,
Of uncouth colours during aye,
That never been none seene in May,
With many a small turret hie,
But man on live could I non sie,
Ne creatures, save ladies play,
Which were such of their array
That, as me thought, of goodlihead
They passeden all and womanhead;
For to behold them daunce and sing,
It seemed like none earthly thing,
Such was their uncouth countinaunce
In every play of right usaunce;
And of one age everichone
They seemed all, save onely one,
Which had of yeeres suffisaunce,
For she might neither sing ne daunce,
But yet her countenaunce was so glad,
As she so fewe yeeres had had
As any lady that was there,
And as little it did her dere
Of lustines to laugh and tale
As she had full stuffed a male

Of disports and new playes:
Faire had she been in her daies,
And maistresse seemed well to be
Of all that lusty companie;
And so she might, I you ensure,
For one the conningest creature
She was, and so said everichone,
That ever her knew, there failed none,
For she was sober and well avised,
And from every fault disguised,
And nothing used but faith and truth;
That she n'as young it was great ruth,
For every where and in ech place,
She governed her, that in grace
She stode alway with poore and riche,
That, at a word, was none her liche,
Ne halfe so able maistres to be
To such a lusty companie.
Befell me so, when I avised
Had the yle that me suffised,
And whole the state every where,
That in that lusty yle was there,
Which was more wonder to devise
Than the joieux paradise,
I dare well say, for floure ne tree,
Ne thing wherein pleasaunce might bee
There failed none, for every wight
Had they desired, day and night,
Riches, heale, beauty, and ease,
With every thing that them might please,
Thinke and have, it cost no more;
In such a country there before,
Had I not bene, ne heard tell
That lives creature might dwell.
And when I had thus all about
The yle avised throughout
The state, and how they were arayed,
In my heart I were well payed,
And in my selfe I me assured
That in my body I was well ured,
Sith I might have such a grace
To see the ladies and the place,
Which were so faire, I you ensure,
That to my dome, though that nature
Would ever strive and do her paine,
She should not con ne mow attaine
The least feature to amend,
Though she would all her conning spend,
That to beauty might availe,
It were but paine and lost travaile,
Such part in their nativity
Was them alarged of beauty,
And eke they had a thing notable
Unto their death, ay durable,
And was, that their beauty should dure,
Which was never seene in creature,
Save onely there (as I trow)
It hath not be wist ne know,
Wherefore I praise with their conning,
That during beauty, rich thing,
Had they been of their lives certaine,
They had been quite of every paine.
And when I wende thus all have seene,
The state, the riches, that might beene,
That me thought impossible were
To see one thing more than was there,
That to beauty or glad conning
Serve or availe might any thing;
All sodainly, as I there stood,
This lady that couth so much good,
Unto me came with smiling chere,
And said, "*Benedicite*, this yere
Saw I never man here but you,
Tell me how ye come hider now?
And your name, and where ye dwell?
And whom ye seeke eke mote ye tell,
And how ye come be to this place,
The soth well told may cause you grace,
And else ye mote prisoner be
Unto the ladies here, and me,
That have the governaunce of this yle:"
And with that word she gan to smile,
And so did all the lusty rout
Of ladies that stood her about.
"Madame," (quod I) "this night past,
Lodged I was and slept fast
In a forest beside a well,
And now am here, how should I tell?
Wot I not by whose ordinance,
But onely Fortunes purveiance,
Which puts many, as I gesse,
To travaile, paine, and businesse,
And lettes nothing for their truth,
But some sleeth eke, and that is ruth,
Wherefore, I doubt her brittilnes,
Her variance and unsteadfastnes,
So that I am as yet afraid,
And of my being here amaid,
For wonder thing seemeth me,
Thus many fresh ladies to see,
So faire, so cunning, and so yong,
And no man dwelling them among:
N'ot I not how I hider come,
Madame," (quod I) "this all and some,
What should I faine a long processe
To you that seeme such a princesse?
What please you commaund or say,
Here I am you to obay,
To my power, and all fulfill,
And prisoner bide at your will,
Till you duly enformed be
Of every thing ye aske me."
This lady there, right well apaid,
Me by the hand tooke, and said,
"Welcome prisoner adventurous,
Right glad am I ye have said thus,
And for ye doubt me to displease,
I will assay to do you ease:"
And with that word, ye anon,
She, and the ladies everichon
Assembled, and to counsaile went,
And after that soone for me sent,
And to me said on this manere,
Word for word, as ye shall here.
"To see you here us thinke marvaile,
And how without bote or saile,
By any subtilty or wyle,
Ye get have entre in this yle;
But not for that, yet shall ye see
That we gentill women bee,
Loth to displease any wight,
Notwithstanding our great right,
And for ye shall well understond
The old custome of this lond,
Which hath continued many yere,
Ye shall well wete that with us here
Ye may not bide, for causes twaine,
Which we be purposed you to saine.
"Th'one is this, our ordinance,
Which is of long continuance,

Woll not, sothly we you tell,
That no man here among us dwell,
Wherefore ye mote needs retourne,
In no wise may you here sojourne.
" Th'other is eke, that our queene
Out of the realme, as ye may seene,
Is, and may be to us a charge,
If we let you goe here at large,
For which cause the more we doubt,
To doe a fault while she is out,
Or suffer that may be noysaunce,
Againe our old accustomaunce."
And whan I had these causes twaine
Heard, O God ! what a paine
All sodainly about mine herte
There came at ones and how smart,
In creeping soft as who should steale,
Or doe me robbe of all mine heale,
And made me in my thought so fraid,
That in courage I stode dismaid.
And standing thus, as was my grace,
A lady came more than apace,
With huge prease her about,
And told how the queene without
Was arived and would come in,
Well were they that thider might twin,
They hied so they would not abide
The bridling their horse to ride,
By five, by sixe, by two, by three,
There was not one abode with me,
The queene to meet everichone,
They went, and bode with me not one :
And I, after a soft pase,
Imagining how to purchase
Grace of the queene, there to bide,
Till good fortune some happy guide
Me send might, that would me bring
Where I was borne to my wonning,
For way ne foot knew I none,
No witherward I n'ist to gone,
For all was sea about the yle,
No wonder though me list not smile,
Seeing the case uncouth and straunge,
And so in like a perilous chaunge ;
Imagining thus walking alone,
I saw the ladies everichone,
So that I might somwhat offer,
Sone after that I drew me nere,
And tho I was ware of the queene,
And how the ladies on their kneene,
With joyous words, gladly advised,
Her welcomed so that it suffised,
Though she princes hole had be
Of all environed is with see :
And thus avising, with chere sad,
All sodainly I was glad,
That greater joy, as mote I thrive,
I trow had never man on live,
Than I tho, ne heart more light,
Whan of my lady I had sight,
Which with the queene come was there,
And in one clothing both they were,
A knight also there well bescene,
I saw that come was with the queene,
Of whome the ladies of that yle
Had huge wonder longe while,
Till at the last right soberly,
The queene her selfe full cunningly,
With soft words in good wise,
Said to the ladies young and nise,

" My sisters, how it hath befall,
I trow ye know it one and all,
That of long time here have I beene,
Within this yle biding as queene,
Living at ease, that never wight
More parfit joy have ne might,
And to you been of governance,
Such as you found in whole pleasance,
In every thing as ye know,
After our custome and our low,
Which how they first found were,
I trow ye wote all the manere,
And who queene is of this yle,
As I have been long while,
Ech seven yeeres not of usage,
Visit the heavenly armitage,
Which on a rocke so high stonds,
In strange sea out from all londs,
That to make the pilgrimage
Is called a long perillous viage,
For if the wind be not good frend,
The journey dures to the end
Of him that it undertakes,
Of twenty thousand one not scapes ;
Upon which rock growth a tree,
That certaine yeeres beares apples three,
Which three apples who may have,
Been from all displeasaunce save,
That in the seven yeere may fall,
This wote you well one and all,
For the first apple and the hext,
Which growth unto you next,
Hath three vertues notable,
And keepeth youth aie durable,
Beauty and looke, ever in one,
And is the best in everichone.
" The second apple red and grene,
Onely with lookes of your yene,
You nourishes in pleasaunce
Better than partridge or fesaunce,
And feeds every lives wight
Pleasantly with the sight.
" The third apple of the three,
Which groweth lowest on the tree,
Who it beares may not faile
That to his pleasaunce may availe.
So your pleasure and beauty rich,
Your during youth ever liche,
Your truth, your cunning, and your weale,
Hath aye floured, and your good heale,
Without sicknes or displeasaunce,
Or thing that to you was noysaunce,
So that you have as goddesses,
Lived above all princesses :
Now is befall, as ye may see ;
To gather these said apples three,
I have not failed againe the day,
Thitherward to take the way,
Wening to speed as I had oft,
But whan I come, I find aloft
My sister which that here stands,
Having those apples in her hands,
Avising them and nothing said,
But looked as she were well paid :
And as I stood her to behold,
Thinking how my joyes were cold,
Sith I those apples have ne might,
Even with that so came this knight,
And in his armes of me aware,
Me tooke, and to his ship me bare,

And said, though him I never had seen,
Yet had I long his lady been,
Wherefore I should with him wend,
And he would to his lives end
My servant be, and gan to sing
As one that had wonne a rich thing;
Tho were my spirits fro me gone,
So sodainly everichone,
That in me appeared but death,
For I felt neither life ne breath,
Ne good ne harme none I knew,
The sodaine paine me was so new,
That had not the hasty grace be
Of this lady, that fro the tree
Of her gentilnesse so hied
Me to comfort, I had died,
And of her three apples, one
In mine hand there put anone,
Which brought againe mind and breath,
And me recovered from the death,
Wherefore, to her so am I hold,
That for her all things do I wold,
For she was lech of all my smart,
And from great paine so quite mine hart,
And, as God wote, right as ye heare,
Me to comfort with friendly cheare
She did her prowesse and her might,
And truly eke so did this knight,
In that he couth, and oft said,
That of my wo he was ill paid,
And cursed the ship that them there brought
The mast, the master that it wrought;
And as ech thing mote have an end,
My sister here your brother frend,
Con with her words so womanly
This knight entreat, and conningly,
For mine honour and his also,
And said that with her we should go
Both in her ship, where she was brought,
Which was so wonderfully wrought,
So cleane, so rich, and so araid,
That we were both content and paid,
And me to comfort and to please,
And mine herte to put at ease,
She toke great paine in little while,
And thus hath brought us to this yle,
As ye may see, wherefore echone,
I pray you thanke her, one and one,
As heartily as ye can devise,
Or imagine in any wise."
At once there tho men might seen
A world of ladies fall on kneen
Before my lady, that there about
Was left none standing in the rout,
But altogither they went at ones
To kneele, they spared not for the stones,
Ne for estate, ne for their blood,
Well shewed there they couth much good,
For to my lady they made such feast,
With such words, that the least,
So friendly and so faithfully
Said was, and so cunningly,
That wonder was, seing their youth,
To here the language they couth,
And wholly how they governed were,
In thanking of my lady there,
And said by will and maundement,
They were at her commaundement,
Which was to me as great a joy,
As winning of the towne of Troy
Was to the hardy Greekes strong,
Whan they it wan with siege long,
To see my lady in such a place
So received as she was:
And whan they talked had a while
Of this and that, and of the yle,
My lady, and the ladies there,
Altogether as they were,
The queene her selfe began to play,
And to the aged lady say:
"Now seemeth you not good it were,
Sith we be altogither here,
To ordaine and devise the best,
To set this knight and me at rest?
For woman is a feble wight
To rere a warre against a knight,
And sith he here is in this place,
At my list, danger or grace,
It were to me great villany
To do him any tiranny,
But faine I would, now will ye here,
In his owne country that he were,
And I in peace, and he at ease,
This were a way us both to please,
If it might be; I you beseech,
With him hereof you fall in speech."
This lady tho began to smile,
Avising her a little while,
And with glad chere she said anone,
"Madam, I will unto him gone,
And with him speake, and of him fele
What he desires every dele:"
And soberly this lady tho,
Her selfe and other ladies two
She tooke with her, and with sad chere,
Said to the knight on this manere,
"Sir, the princes of this yle,
Whom for your pleasance many mile
Ye sought have, as I understond,
Till at the last ye have her fond,
Me sent hath here, and ladies twaine,
To heare all thing that ye saine,
And for what cause ye have her sought,
Faine would she wote, and whol your thought,
And why you do her all this wo,
And for what cause you be her fo?
And why, of every wight unware,
By force ye to your ship her bare,
That she so nigh was agone,
That mind ne speech had she none,
But as a painfull creature,
Dying, abode her adventure,
That her to see indure that paine,
Here well say unto you plaine,
Right on your selfe ye did amisse,
Seeing how she a princes is."
This knight, the which couth his good,
Right of his truth meved his blood,
That pale he woxe as any lead,
And lookt as he would be dead,
Blood was there none in nother cheke,
Wordlesse he was and semed sicke,
And so it proved well he was,
For without moving any pass,
All sodainely as thing dying,
He fell at once downe sowning,
That for his wo this lady fraid,
Unto the queene her hied and said,
"Cometh on anon as have you blisse,
But ye be wise, thing is amisse,

This knight is dead or will be soone,
Lo, where he lyeth in a swoone,
Without word, or answering
To that I have said, any thing:
Wherefore, I doubt that the blame
Might be hindering to your name,
Which floured hath so many yere,
So long, that for nothing here,
I would in no wise he died,
Wherefore good were that ye hied
His life to save at the least,
And after that his wo be ceast,
Commaund him void, or dwell,
For in no wise dare I more mell
Of thing wherein such perill is,
As like is now to fall of this."
This queene right tho full of great feare,
With all the ladies present there,
Unto the knight came where he lay,
And made a lady to him say:
"Lo, here the queene, awake for shame!
What will you doe, is this good game!
Why lye you here, what is your mind!
Now is well seene your wit is blind,
To see so many ladies here,
And ye to make none other chere,
But as ye set them all at nought;
Arise, for his love that you bought:"
But what she said, a word not one
He spake, ne answer gave her none.
The queene of very pitty tho,
Her worship, and his like also,
To save there she did her paine,
And quoke for feare, and gan to saine
For woe, "Alas, what shall I doe!
What shall I say this man unto!
If he die here, lost is my name,
How shal I play this perillous game!
If any thing be here amisse,
It shall be said it rigour is,
Whereby my name impayre might,
And like to die eke is this knight:"
And with that word her hand she laid
Upon his brest, and to him said,
"Awake my knight! lo, it am I
That to you speake, now tell me why
Ye fare thus, and this paine endure,
Seeing ye be in country sure,
Among such friends that would you heale,
Your hertes ease eke and your weale,
And if I wist what you might ease,
Or know the thing that you might please,
I you ensure it should not faile,
That to your heale you might availe:
Wherefore, with all my herte I pray
Ye rise, and let us talke and play;
And see! how many ladies here
Be comen for to make good chere."
All was for nought, for still as stone
He lay, and word spoke none.
Long while was or he might braid,
And of all that the queene had said,
He wist no word, but at the last,
"Mercy," twise he cried fast,
That pitty was his voice to heare,
Or to behold his painefull cheare,
Which was not fained well was to sein,
Both by his visage and his eyn,
Which on the queene at once he cast,
And sighed as he would to brast,
And after that he shright so
That wonder was to see his wo,
For sith that paine was first named,
Was never more wofull paine attained,
For with voice dead he gan to plaine,
And to himselfe these words saine,
"I wofull wight full of malure,
Am worse than dead, and yet dure,
Maugre any paine or death,
Against my will I fell my breath:
Why n'am I dead sith I ne serve,
And sith my lady will me sterve!
Where art thou Death, art thou agast!
Well, shall we meete yet at the last,
Though thou thee hide, it is for nought,
For where thou dwelst thou shalt be sought;
Maugre thy subtill double face,
Here will I die right in this place,
To thy dishonour and mine ease;
Thy manner is no wight to please,
What needs thee, sith I thee seche,
So thee to hide my paine to eche!
And well wost thou I will not live,
Who would me all this world here give,
For I have with my cowardise,
Lost joy, and heale, and my servise,
And made my soveraigne lady so,
That while she lives I trow my fo
She will be ever to her end,
Thus have I neither joy ne frend;
Wote I not whether hast or sloth
Hath caused this now by my troth,
For at the hermitage full hie,
Whan I her saw first with mine eye,
I hied till I was aloft,
And made my pace small and soft,
Till in mine armes I had her fast,
And to my ship bare at the last,
Whereof she was displeased so,
That endlesse there seemed her wo,
And I thereof had so great fere,
That me repent that I come there,
Which hast I trow gan her displease,
And is the cause of my disease:"
And with that word he gan to cry,
"Now Death, Death! twy or thry,
And motred wot I not what of slouth,
And even with that the queene, of routh,
Him in her armes tooke and said,
"Now mine owne knight, be not evill apaid
That I a lady to you sent
To have knowledge of your entent,
For, in good faith, I meant but well,
And would ye wist it every dele,
Nor will not do to you ywis;"
And with that word she gan him kisse,
And prayed him rise, and said she would
His welfare, by her truth, and told
Him how she was for his disease
Right sory, and faine would him please,
His life to save: these words tho
She said to him, and many mo
In comforting, for from the paine
She would he were delivered faine.
The knight tho up cast his een,
And whan he saw it was the queen,
That to him had these words said,
Right in his wo he gan to braid,
And him up dresses for to knele,
The queene avising wonder wele:

But as he rose he overthrew,
Wherefore the queene, yet eft anew,
Him in her armes anon tooke,
And pitiously gan on him looke,
But for all that nothing she said,
Ne spake not like she were well paid,
Ne no chere made, nor sad ne light,
But all in one to every wight
There was seene conning, with estate,
In her without noise or debate,
For save onely a looke piteous,
Of womanhead undispiteous,
That she showed in countenance,
For seemed her herte from obeisance,
And not for that she did her reine
Him to recure from the peine,
And his herte to put at large,
For her entent was to his barge
Him to bring against the eve,
With certaine ladies and take leve,
And pray him of his gentilnesse,
To suffer her thenceforth in peace,
As other princes had before,
And from thenceforth for evermore,
She would him worship in all wise,
That gentilnesse might devise,
And paine her wholly to fulfill,
In honour, his pleasure and will.
And during thus this knights wo,
Present the queene and other mo,
My lady, and many another wight,
Ten thousand ships at a sight,
I saw come over the wawy flood,
With saile and ore, that as I stood
Them to behold, I gan marvaile
From whom might come so many a saile,
For sith the time that I was bore,
Such a navy there before
Had I not seene, ne so arayed,
That for the sight my herte played
To and fro within my brest
For joy, long was or it would rest,
For there was sailes full of floures,
After castels with huge toures,
Seeming full of armes bright,
That wonder lusty was the sight,
With large toppes, and mastes long,
Richly depeint, and rear among
At certain times gan repaire
Small birds downe from th'aire,
And on the ships bounds about
Sate and song with voice full out,
Ballades and layes right joyously,
As they couth in their harmony,
That you to write that I there see,
Mine excuse is it may not be,
For why! the matter were to long
To name the birds and write their song:
Whereof, anon, the tidings there
Unto the queene soone brought were,
With many alas, and many a doubt,
Shewing the ships there without.
Tho gan the aged lady weepe,
And said, "Alas, our joy on sleepe
Soone shall be brought, ye, long or night,
For we descried been by this knight,
For certes, it may none other be,
But he is of yond companie,
And they be come him here to seche,"
And with that word her failed speche.
"Without remedy we be destroid,"
Full oft said all, and gan conclude,
Holy at once at the last,
That best was shit their yates fast,
And arme them all in good langage,
As they had done of old usage,
And of faire wordes make their shot,
This was their counsaile and the knot,
And other purpose tooke they none,
But armed thus forth they gone
Toward the walles of the yle,
But or they come there long while,
They met the great lord of bove,
That called is the god of love,
That them avised with such chere,
Right as he with them angry were:
Availed them not their walls of glasse,
This mighty lord let not to passe,
The shutting of their yates fast,
All they had ordaind was but wast,
For whan his ships had found land,
This lord anon, with bow in hand,
Into this yle with huge prease
Hied fast, and would not cease
Till he came there the knight lay;
Of queene ne lady by the way
Tooke he no heed but forth past,
And yet all followed at the last;
And whan he came where lay the knight,
Well shewed he he had great might,
And forth the queene called anone,
And all the ladies everichone,
And to them said, "Is not thus routh,
To see my servaunt for his trouth,
Thus leane, thus sicke, and in this paine,
And wot not unto whom to plaine,
Save onely one without mo,
Which might him him heale and is his fo!"
And with that word his heavy brow
He shewed the queene and looked row;
This mighty lord forth tho anone,
With o looke her faults echone
He can her shew in little speech,
Commaunding her to be his leech,
Withouten more, shortly to say,
He thought the queene soone should obay,
And in his hond he shoke his bow,
And said right soone he would be know,
And for she had so long refused
His service, and his lawes not used,
He let her wit that he was wroth,
And bent his bow and forth he goth
A pace or two, and even there
A large draught, up to his eare,
He drew, and with an arrow ground
Sharpe and new, the queene a wound
He gave, that piersed unto the herte,
Which afterward full sore gan smart,
And was not whole of many a yeare;
And even with that, "Be of good cheare,
My knight," (quod he) "I will thee hele,
And thee restore to parfite wele,
And for each paine thou hast endured,
To have two joys thou art cured:"
And forth he past by the rout,
With sober cheare walking about,
And what he said I thought to heare,
Well wist he which his servaunts were,
And as he passed anon he fond,
My lady, and her tooke by the hond,

And made her chere as a goddes,
And of beaute called her princes,
Of bounte eke gave her the name,
And said there was nothing blame
In her, but she was vertuous,
Saving she would no pity use,
Which was the cause that he her sought,
To put that far out of her thought,
And sith she had whole richesse
Of womanhead, and friendlinesse,
He said it was nothing fitting
To void pity his owne legging,
And gan her preach and with her play,
And of her beauty told her aie,
And said she was a creature
Of whom the name should endure,
And in bookes full of pleasaunce
Be put for ever in remembraunce,
And, as me thought, more friendly
Unto my lady, and goodlely
He spake, than any that was there,
And for th' apples I trow it were,
That she had in possession;
Wherefore, long in procession,
Many a pace, arme under other,
He welke, and so did with none other,
But what he would commaund or say,
Forthwith needs all must obay,
And what he desired at the lest,
Of my lady, was by request;
And whan they long together had beene,
He brought my lady to the queene,
And to her said, "So God you speed,
Shew grace, consent, that is need."
My lady tho, full conningly,
Right well avised and womanly
Downe gan to kneele upon the floures,
Which April nourished had with shoures,
And to this mighty lord gan say,
"That pleaseth you, I woll obay,
And me restraine from other thought,
As ye woll all thing shall be wrought."
And with that word kneeling she quoke;
That mighty lord in armes her tooke,
And said, "You have a servaunt one,
That truer living is there none,
Wherefore, good were, seeing his trouth,
That on his paines ye had routh,
And purpose you to heare his speech,
Fully avised him to leech,
For of one thyng ye may be sure,
He will be yours while he may dure."
And with that word, right on his game,
Me thought he lough, and told my name,
Which was to me marvaile and fere,
That what to do I n'ist there,
Ne whether was me bet or none,
There to abide, or thus to gone,
For well wend I my lady wold
Imagen or deme that I had told
My counsaile whole, or made complaint
Unto that lord, that mighty saint,
So verily each thing unsought
He said, as he had knowne my thought,
And told my trouth and mine unease
Bet than I couth have for mine ease,
Though I had studied all a weeke,
Well wist that lord that I was seeke,
And would be leched wonder faine,
No man me blame, mine was the paine.
And whan this lord had all said,
And long with my lady plaid,
She gan to smile with spirit glade,
This was the answere that she made,
Which put me there in double peine,
That what to do, ne what to seine
Wist I not, ne what was the best,
Ferre was my herte than fro his rest,
For, as I thought, that smiling signe
Was token that the herte encline
Would to requests reasonable,
Because smiling is favorable
To every thing that shall thrive,
So thought I tho; anon, blive,
That worldlesse answere in no toun
Was tane for obligatioun,
Ne called surety in no wise,
Amongst them that called been wise.
Thus was I in a joyous dout,
Sure and unsurest of that rout,
Right as mine herte thought it were,
So more or lesse wexe my fere,
That if one thought made it wele
Another shent it every dele,
Till, at the last, I couth no more,
But purposed, as I did before,
To serve truly my lives space,
Awaiting ever the yeare of grace,
Which may fall yet or I sterve,
If it please her that I serve,
And served have, and woll do ever,
For thing is none that me is lever
Than her service, whose presence
Mine Heaven is whole, and her absence
An Hell, full of divers paines,
Which to the death full oft me straines.
Thus in my thoughts as I stood,
That unneth felt I harme ne good,
I saw the queene a little paas
Come where this mighty lord was,
And kneeled downe in presence there
Of all the ladies that there were,
With sober countenaunce avised,
In few words that well suffised,
And to this lord, anon, present
A bill, wherein whole her entent
Was written, and how she besought,
As he knew every will and thought,
That of his godhead and his grace
He would forgive all old trespace,
And undispleased be of time past,
For she would ever be stedfast,
And in his service to the death
Use every thought while she had breath;
And sight and wept, and said no more;
Within was written all the sore,
At which bill the lord gan smile,
And said he would within that yle
Be lord and sire, both east and west,
And cald it there his new conquest,
And in great councell tooke the queene,
Long were the tales them betweene,
And over her bill he read thrise,
And wonder gladly gan devise
Her features faire and her visage,
And bad good thrift on that image,
And sayd he trowed her compleint
Should after cause her be corseint,
And in his sleeve he put the bill,
Was there none that knew his will,

And forth he walke apace about
Beholding all the lusty rout,
Halfe in a thought with smiling chere,
Till at the last, as ye shall here,
He turned unto the queene ageine,
And said, "To morne. here in this pleine,
I woll ye be, and all yours,
That purposed ben to weare flours,
Or of my lusty colour use,
It may not be to you excuse,
Ne none of yours in no wise,
That able be to my servise,
For as I said have here before,
I will be lord for evermore
Of you, and of this yle, and all,
And of all yours, that have shall
Joy, peace, ease, or in pleasaunce
Your lives use without noysaunce;
Here will I in state be seene,"
And turned his visage to the queene,
"And you give knowledge of my will,
And a full answere of your bill."
Was there no nay, ne words none,
But very obeisaunt seemed echone,
Queene and other that were there,
Well seemed it they had great fere,
And there tooke lodging every night,
Was none departed of that night,
And some to read old romances,
Them occupied for their pleasances,
Some to make verelaies and laies,
And some to other diverse plaies:
And I to me a romance tooke,
And as I reading was the booke,
Me thought the sphere had so run,
That it was rising of the Sun,
And such a prees into the plaine
Assemble gone, that with great paine
One might for other go ne stand,
Ne none take other by the hand,
Withouten they distourbed were,
So huge and great the prees was there.
And after that within two houres,
This mighty lord all in floures
Of divers colours many a paire,
In his estate up in the aire,
Well two fathom, as his hight,
He set him there in all their sight,
And for the queene and for the knight,
And for my lady, and every wight
In hast he sent, so that never one
Was there absent, but come echone:
And whan they thus assembled were,
As ye have heard me say you here,
Without more tarrying, on hight,
There to be seene of every wight,
Up stood among the prees above
A counsayler, servaunt of Love,
Which seemed well of great estate,
And shewed there how no debate
Owe ne goodly might be used
In gentilnesse, and be excused,
Wherefore, he said, his lordes will
Was every wight there should be still,
And in pees, and one accord,
And thus commaunded at a word,
And can his tongue to swiche language
Turne, that yet in all mine age
Heard I never so conningly
Man speake, ne halfe so faithfully,
For every thing he said there
Seemed as it inscaled were,
Or approved for very trew:
Swiche was his cunning language new,
And well according to his chere,
That where I be, me thinke I here
Him yet alway, whan I mine one
In any place may be alone:
First con he of the lusty yle
All th'astate in little while
Rehearse, and wholly every thing
That caused there his lordes comming,
And every wele and every wo,
And for what cause ech thing was so,
Well shewed he there in easie speech,
And how the sicke had need of leech:
And that whole was, and in grace,
He told plainly why each thing was,
And at the last he con conclude,
Voided every language rude,
And said, "That prince, that mighty lord,
Or his departing, would accord
All the parties there present,
And was the fine of his entent,
Witnesse his presence in your sight,
Which sits among you in his might:"
And kneeled downe withouten more,
And not o word spake he more.
Tho gan this mighty lord him dresse,
With cheare avised, to do largesse,
And said unto this knight and me,
"Ye shall to joy restored be,
And for ye have ben true, ye twaine,
I graunt you here for every paine
A thousand joys every weeke,
And looke ye be no lenger seeke.
And both your ladies, lo, hem here
Take ech his own, beeth of good chere,
Your happy day is new begun,
Sith it was rising of the Sun,
And to all other in this place
I graunt wholly to stand in grace,
That serveth truely, without slouth,
And to avaunced be by trouth."
Tho can this knight and I downe kneele,
Wening to doe wonder wele,
"Seeing, O Lord, your great mercy,
Us hath enriched so openly,
That we deserve may never more
The least part, but evermore
With soule and body truely serve
You and yours till we sterve."
And to their ladies there they stood,
This knight that couth so mikel good,
Went in hast, and I also,
Joyous, and glad were we tho,
And also rich in every thought,
As he that all hath and ought nought,
And them besought in humble wise,
Us t'accept to their service,
And shew us of their friendly cheares,
Which in their treasure many yeares,
They kept had, us to great paine,
And told how their servants twaine,
Were and would be, and so had ever,
And to the death chaunge would we never,
Ne doe offence, ne thinke like ill,
But fill their ordinance and will:
And made our othes fresh new,
Our old service to renew,

And wholly theirs for evermore,
We there become, what might we more?
And well awaiting, that in slouth
We made ne fault, ne in our trouth,
Ne thought not do, I you ensure,
With our will, where we may dure.
This season past, againe an eve,
This lord of the queene tooke leve,
And said he would hastely returne,
And at good leisure there sojourne,
Both for his honour and for his ease,
Commaunding fast the knight to please,
And gave his statutes in papers,
And ordent divers officers,
And forth to ship the same night
He went, and soone was out of sight.
And on the morrow, whan the aire
Attempred was and wonder faire,
Early at rising of the Sun,
After the night away was run,
Playing us on the rivage,
My lady spake of her voyage,
And said she made small journies,
And held her in straunge countries,
And forthwith to the queene went,
And shewed her wholly her entent,
And tooke her leave with cheare weeping,
That pitty was to see that parting:
For to the queene it was a paine,
As to a martyr new yslaine,
That for her woe, and she so tender,
Yet I weepe oft whan I remember;
She offerd there to resigne,
To my lady eight times or nine,
Th'astate, the yle, shortly to tell,
If it might please her there to dwell,
And said for ever her linage
Should to my lady doe homage,
And hers be hole withouten more,
Ye, and all theirs for evermore:
"Nay, God forbid," my lady oft,
With many conning word and soft,
Seid, "that ever such thing should beene,
That I consent should, that a queene
Of your estate, and so well named,
In any wise should be attamed;
But would be faine with all my herte,
What so befell, or how me smert,
To doe thing that you might please,
In any wise, or be your ease:"
And kissed there, and bad good night,
For which leve wept many a wight;
There might men here my lady praised,
And such a name of her araised,
What of cunning and friendlinesse,
What of beauty with gentilnesse,
What of glad and friendly cheares,
That she used in all her yeares,
That wonder was here every wight,
To say well how they did their might;
And with a prees, upon the morrow,
To ship her brought, and what a sorrow
They made, whan she should under saile,
That, and ye wist, ye would mervaile.
Forth goeth the ship, out goeth the sond,
And I as a wood man unbond,
For doubt to be behind there,
Into the sea withouten fere,
Anon I ran, till with a waw,
All sodenly I was overthraw,
And with the water to and fro,
Backward and forward travailed so,
That mind and breath nigh was gone
For good ne harme knew I none,
Til at the last with hookes tweine,
Men of the ship with mikel peine,
To save my life, did such travaile,
That, and ye wist, ye would mervaile,
And in the ship me drew on hie,
And saiden all that I would die,
And laid me long downe by the mast,
And of their clothes on me cast,
And there I made my testament,
And wist my selfe not what I ment,
But whan I said had what I would,
And to the mast my wo all told,
And tane my leave of every wight,
And closed mine eyen, and lost my sight,
Avised to die, without more speech,
Or any remedy to seech
Of grace new, as was great need:
My lady of my paine tooke heed,
And her bethought how that for trouth
To see me die it were great routh,
And to me came in sober wise,
And softly said, "I pray you rise,
Come on with me, let be this fare,
All shall be wel, have ye no care,
I will obey ye and fulfill
Holy in all that lords will,
That you and me not long ago,
After his list commaunded so,
That there againe no resistence
May be without great offence,
And, therefore, now loke what I say,
I am and will be friendly aye,
Rise up, behold this avauntage,
I graunt you inheritage,
Peaceably without strive,
During the daies of your live."
And of her apples in my sleve
One she put, and took her leve
In words few and said, "Good hele,
He that all made, you send and wele:"
Wherewith my paines, all at ones,
Tooke such leave, that all my bones,
For the new duranse pleasaunce,
So as they couth, desired to daunce,
And I as whole as any wight,
Up rose, with joyous herte and light,
Hole and unsicke, right wele at ease,
And all forget had my disease,
And to my lady, where she plaid,
I went anone, and to her said:
"He that all joies persons to please
First ordained with parfite ease,
And every pleasure can depart,
Send you madame, as large a part,
And of his goods such plenty,
As he has done you of beauty,
With hele and all that may be thought,
He send you all as he all wrought:
Madame," (quoth I) "your servaunt trew,
Have I ben long, and yet will new,
Without chaunge or repentaunce,
In any wise or variaunce,
And so will do, as thrive I ever,
For thing is none that me is lever
Than you to please, how ever I fare,
Mine hertes lady and my welfare,

My life, mine hele, my lech also,
Of every thing that doth me wo,
My helpe at need, and my surete
Of every joy that longs to me,
My succours whole in all wise,
That may be thought or man devise,
Your grace, madame, such have I found,
Now in my need that I am bound
To you for ever, so Christ me save,
For heale and live of you I have,
Wherefore is reasoun I you serve,
With due obeisaunce till I sterve,
And dead and quicke be ever yours,
Late, early, and at all hours."
Tho came my lady small alite,
And in plaine English con consite
In words few, whole her entent
She shewed me there, and how she ment
To meward in every wise,
Wholly she came at their devise,
Without processe or long travell,
Charging me to keepe counsell,
As I would to her grace attaine,
Of which commaundement I was faine,
Wherefore I passe over at this time,
For counsell cords not well in rime,
And eke the oth that I have swore,
To breake me were better unbore,
Why for untrue for evermore
I should be hold, that nevermore
Of me in place should be report
Thing that availe might, or comfort
To mewards in any wise,
And ech wight would me dispise
In that they couth, and me repreeve,
Which were a thing sore for to greeve,
Wherefore hereof more mencion
Make I not now ne long sermon,
But shortly thus I me excuse,
To rime a councell I refuse.
Sailing thus two dayes or three,
My lady towards her countree,
Over the waves high and greene,
Which were large and deepe betweene,
Upon a time me called, and said
That of my hele she was well paid,
And of the queene and of the yle,
She talked with me long while,
And of all that she there had seene,
And of the state, and of the queene,
And of the ladies name by name,
Two houres or mo, this was her game,
Till at the last the wind gan rise,
And blew so fast, and in such wise,
The ship that every wight can say,
" Madame, er eve be of this day,
And God tofore, ye shall be there
As ye would fainest that ye were,
And doubt not within sixe hours,
Ye shall be there, as all is yours."
At which words she gan to smile,
And said that was no long while,
That they her set, and up she rose,
And all about the ship she gose,
And made good cheare to every wight,
Till of the land she had a sight,
Of which sight glad, God it wote,
She was abashed and abote,
And forth goeth, shortly you to tell,
Where she accustomed was to dwell,
And received was, as good right,
With joyous cheere and hertes light,
And as a glad new aventure,
Pleasaunt to every creature,
With which landing tho I woke,
And found my chamber full of smoke,
My cheekes eke unto the eares,
And all my body wet with teares,
And all so feeble and in such wise,
I was, that unneth might I rise,
So fare travailed and so faint,
That neither knew I kirke ne saint,
Ne what was what, ne who was who,
Ne avised what way I would go,
But by a venturous grace,
I rise and walkt, sought pace and pace,
Till I a winding staire found,
And held the vice aye in my hond,
And upward softly so gan creepe,
Till I came where I thought to sleepe
More at mine ease, and out of preace,
At my good leisure, and in peace,
Till somewhat I recomfort were
Of the travell and great feare
That I endured had before,
This was my thought without more,
And as a wight witlesse and faint,
Without more, in a chamber paint
Full of stories old and divers,
More than I can now rehearse,
Unto a bed full soberly,
So as I might full sothly,
Pace after other, and nothing said,
Till at the last downe I me laid,
And as my mind would give me leve,
All that I dreamed had that eve,
Before all I can rehearse,
Right as a child at schoole his verse
Doth after that he thinketh to thrive,
Right so did I for all my live,
I thought to have in remembraunce,
Both the paine and the pleasaunce,
The dreame whole, as it me befell,
Which was as ye here me tell.
Thus in my thoughts as I lay,
That happy or unhappy day,
Wot I not, so have I blame,
Of the two which is the name:
Befell me so, that there a thought,
By processe new on sleepe me brought,
And me governed so in a while,
That againe within the yle,
Methought I was, whereof the knight,
And of the ladies I had a sight,
And were assembled on a greene,
Knight and lady, with the queene,
At which assembly there was said,
How they all content and paid
Were wholly as in that thing,
That the knight there should be king,
And they would all for sure witnesse
Wedded be both more and lesse,
In remembraunce without more,
Thus they consent for evermore,
And was concluded that the knight
Depart should the same night,
And forthwith there tooke his voiage,
To journey for his marriage,
And returne with such an host,
That wedded might be least and most,

This was concluded, written and sealed,
That it might not be repealed
In no wise, but aie be firme,
And all should be within a tearme,
Without more excusation,
Both feast and coronation.
This knight which had thereof the charge,
Anon into a little barge
Brought was late against an eve,
Where of all he tooke his leave;
Which barge was as a mans thought,
After his pleasure to him brought,
The queene her selfe accustomed aye
In the same barge to play,
It needeth neither mast ne rother,
I have not heard of such another,
No maister for the governaunce,
Hie sayled by thought and pleasaunce,
Without labour, east and west,
All was one, calme or tempest,
And I went with at his request,
And was the first prayed to the fest.
Whan he came in his countree,
And passed had the wavy see,
In an haven deepe and large
He left his rich and noble barge,
And to the court, shortly to tell,
He went, where he wont was to dwell,
And was received as good right,
As heire, and for a worthy knight,
With all the states of the lond,
Which came anon at his first sond,
With glad spirits full of trouth,
Loth to do fault or with a slouth,
Attaint be in any wise;
Their riches was their old servise,
Which ever trow had be fond,
Sith first inhabit was the lond,
And so received there hir king,
That forgotten was no thing,
That owe to be done ne might please,
Ne their soveraine lord do ease,
And with them, so shortly to say,
As they of custome had done aye,
For seven yere past was and more,
The father, the old wise and hore
King of the land tooke his leve
Of all his barons on an eve,
And told them how his dayes past
Were all, and comen was the last,
And hertily prayed hem to remember
His sonne, which yong was and tender,
That borne was their prince to be,
If he returne to that countree
Might, by adventure or grace,
Within any time or space,
And to be true and friendly aye,
As they to him had bene alway:
Thus he them prayd, without more,
And tooke his leave for evermore.
Knowen was how, tender in age,
This young prince a great viage
Uncouth and straunge, honours to seeche,
Tooke in hond with little speeche,
Which was to seeke a princes
That he desired more than riches,
For her great name that floured so,
That in that time there was no mo
Of her estate ne so well named,
For borne was none that ever her blamed:
Of which princes somewhat before,
Here have I spoke, and some will more.
So thus befell as ye shall heare,
Unto their lord they made such cheare,
That joy was there to be present
To see their troth and how they ment,
So very glad they were ech one,
That them among there was no one,
That desired more riches,
Than for their lord such a princes,
That they might please, and that were faire,
For fast desired they an heire,
And said great surety were ywis.
And as they were speaking of this,
The prince himselfe him avised,
And in plaine English undisguised,
Them shewed hole his journey,
And of their counsell gan them prey,
And told how he ensured was,
And how his day he might not passe,
Without diffame and great blame,
And to him for ever shame,
And of their counsell and avise,
There he prayth them once or twise,
And that they would within ten daies,
Avise and ordaine him such waies,
So that it were no displeasaunce,
Ne to this realme over great grievaunce,
And that he have might to his feast,
Sixty thousand at the least,
For his intent within short while
Was to returne unto his yle
That he came fro, and kepe his day,
For nothing would he be away.
To counsaile tho the lords anon,
Into a chamber everychone,
Togither went, them to devise,
How they might best and in what wise,
Purvey for their lords pleasaunce
And the realmes continuaunce
Of honor, which in it before
Had continued evermore.
So, at the last, they found the waies,
How within the next ten daies,
All might with paine and diligence
Be done, and cast what the dispence
Might draw, and in conclusion,
Made for ech thing provision.
Whan this was done, wholly toforo
The prince, the lords all before
Come, and shewed what they had done,
And how they couth by no reason
Find that within the ten daies,
He might depart by no waies,
But would be fifteene, at the least,
Or he returne might to his feast:
And shewed him every reason why
It might not be so hastily,
As he desired, ne his day
He might not keepe by no way,
For divers causes wonder great:
Which, whan he heard, in such an heat
He fell, for sorow and was seke,
Still in his bed whole that weke,
And nigh the tother for the shame,
And for the doubt, and for the blame
That might on him be aret,
And oft upon his brest he bet,
And said, "Alas, mine honour for aye,
Have I here lost cleane this day,

Dead would I be! alas, my name
Shall aye be more henceforth in shame,
And I dishonoured and repreved,
And never more shall be beleeved:"
And made swich sorow, that in trouth,
Him to behold it was great routh:
And so endured the dayes fiftene,
Till that the lords on an even
Him come, and told they ready were,
And shewed in few words there,
How and what wise they had purveyd
For his estate, and to him said,
That twenty thousand knights of name,
And fourty thousand without blame,
All come of noble lignee,
Togider in a companee,
Were lodged on a rivers side,
Him and his pleasure there t'abide.
The prince tho for joy up rose,
And where they lodged were, he goes
Without more that same night,
And these his supper made to dight,
And with them bode till it was dey,
And forthwith to take his journey,
Leving the streight, holding the large,
Till he came to his noble barge;
And when this prince, this lusty knight,
With his people in armes bright,
Was comen where he thought to pas,
And knew well none abiding was
Behind, but all were there present,
Forthwith anon all his intent
He told them there, and made his cries
Through his hoste that day twise,
Commaunding every lives wight,
There being present in his sight,
To be the morow on the rivage,
Where he begin would his viage.
The morrow come, the cry was kept,
Few was there that night that slept,
But trussed and purveied for the morrow,
For fault of ships was all their sorrow,
For save the barge, and other two,
Of ships there saw I no mo:
Thus in their doubts as they stood,
Waxing the sea, comming the flood,
Was cried, "To ship goe every wight,"
Than was but hie, that hie might,
And to the barge me thought echone
They went, without was left not one,
Horse, male, trusse, ne bagage,
Salade, speare, gard-brace, ne page,
But was lodged and roome ynough,
At which shipping me thought I lough,
And gan to marvaile in my thought,
How ever such a ship was wrought,
For what people that can encrease,
Ne never so thicke might be the prease,
But all had roome at their will,
There was not one was lodged ill,
For as I trow, my selfe the last
Was one, and lodged by the mast,
And where I looked I saw such rome,
As all were lodged in a towne.
Forth goth the ship, said was the creed,
And on their knees for their good speed,
Downe kneeled every wight a while,
And praied fast that to the yle
They might come in safety,
The prince and all the company,
With worship and without blame,
Or disclaunder of his name,
Of the promise he should retourne,
Within the time he did sojourne,
In his lond biding his host,
This was their prayer of least and most;
To keepe the day it might not been,
That he appointed had with the queen,
To returne without slouth,
And so assured had his trouth,
For which fault this prince, this knight,
During the time slept not a night,
Such was his wo and his disease,
For doubt he should the queene displease.
Forth goeth the ship with such speed,
Right as the prince for his great need
Desire would after his thought,
Till it unto the yle him brought,
Where in hast upon the sand,
He and his people tooke the land,
With hertes glad, and chere light,
Weening to be in Heaven that night:
But or they passed a while,
Entring in toward that yle,
All clad in blacke with chere piteous,
A lady which never dispiteous
Had be in all her life tofore,
With sory chere, and herte to tore,
Unto this prince where he gan ride,
Come and said, "Abide, abide,
And have no hast, but fast retourne,
No reason is ye here sojourne,
For your untruth hath us discried,
Wo worth the time we us allied
With you, that are so soone untrew,
Alas, the day that we you knew!
Alas, the time that ye were bore,
For all this lond by you is lore!
Accursed be he you hider brought,
For all your joy is turnd to nought,
Your acquaintance we may complaine,
Which is the cause of all our paine."
"Alas, madame," quoth tho this knight,
And with that from his horse he light,
With colour pale, and cheekes lene,
"Alas, what is this for to mene?
What have ye said, why be ye wroth?
You to displease I would be loth,
Know ye not well the promesse
I made have to your princesse,
Which to perfourme is mine intent,
So mote I speed, as I have ment,
And as I am her very trew,
Without change or thought new,
And also fully her servand,
As creature or man livand
May be to lady or princesse,
For she mine Heaven and whole richesse
Is, and the lady of mine heale,
My worlds joy and all my weale,
What may this be, whence coms this speech?
Tell me, madame, I you beseech,
For sith the first of my living,
Was I so fearfull of nothing,
As I am now to heare you speake;
For dout I feele mine herte breake;
Say on, madame, tell me your will,
The remenaunt is it good or ill?"
"Alas," (quod she) "that ye were bore,
For, for your love this land is lore!

The queene is dead, and that is ruth,
For sorrow of your great untruth ;
Of two partes of the lusty rout
Of ladies that were there about,
That wont were to talke and play,
Now are dead and cleane away,
And under earth tane lodging new ;
Alas, that ever ye were untrew !
For whan the time ye set was past,
The queene to counsaile sone in hast,
What was to doe, and said great blame
Your acquaintaunce cause would and shame,
And the ladies of their avise
Prayed, for need was to be wise,
In eschewing tales and songs,
That by them make would ill tongs,
And sey they were lightly conquest,
And prayed to a poore feast,
And foule had their worship weived,
Whan so unwisely they conceived,
Their rich treasour, and their heale,
Their famous name, and their weale,
To put in such an aventure,
Of which the sclaunder ever dure
Was like, without helpe of appele,
Wherefore they need had of counsele,
For every wight of them would say
Their closed yle an open way
Was become to every wight,
And well appreved by a knight,
Which he alas, without paysaunce,
Had soone acheved thobeisaunce:
All this was moved at counsell thrise,
And concluded daily twise,
That bet was die without blame
Than lose the riches of their name,
Wherefore, the deaths acquaintaunce
They chese, and left have their pleasaunce,
For doubt to live as repreved,
In that they you so soone beleeved,
And made their othes with one accord,
That eat, ne drinke, ne speake word,
They should never, but ever weping
Bide in a place without parting,
And use their dayes in penaunce,
Without desire of allegeaunce,
Of which the truth, anon, con preve,
For why ! the queen forthwith her leve
Toke at them all that were present,
Of her defauts fully repent,
And died there withouten more:
Thus are we lost for evermore ;
What should I more hereof reherse ?
Comen within, come see her herse,
Where ye shall see the piteous sight,
That ever yet was shewen to knight,
For ye shall see ladies stond,
Ech with a great rod in hond,
Clad in black, with visage white,
Ready each other for to smite,
If any be that will not wepe,
Or who that makes countenaunce to slepe ;
They be so bet, that all so blew
They be as cloth that died is new,
Such is their parfite repentance ;
And thus they kepe their ordinance,
And will do ever to the death,
While them endures any breath."
This knight tho in armes twaine,
This lady tooke and gan her saine,
"Alas, my birth ! wo worth my life !"
And even with that he drew a knife,
And through gowne, doublet, and shert,
He made the blood come from his herte,
And set him downe upon the greene,
And full repent closed his eene,
And save that ones he drew his breath,
Without more thus he tooke his death.
For which cause the lusty hoast,
Which in a battaile on the coast,
At once for sorrow such a cry
Gan rere thorow the company,
That to the Heaven heard was the sowne,
And under therth als fer adowne,
That wild beasts for the feare
So sodainly afrayed were,
That for the doubt, while they might dure,
They ran as of their lives unsure,
From the woods unto the plaine,
And from the valleys the high mountaine
They sought, and ran as beastes blind,
That cleane forgotten had their kind.
This wo not ceased, to counsaile went
These lords, and for that lady sent,
And of avise what was to done,
They her besought she say would sone.
Weeping full sore, all clad in blake,
This lady softly to them spake,
And said, "My lords, by my trouth,
This mischiefe it is of your slouth,
And if ye had that judge would right,
A prince that were a very knight,
Ye that ben of astate, echone,
Die for his fault should one and one ;
And if he hold had the promesse,
And done that longs to gentilnesse,
And fulfilled the princes behest,
This hasty farme had bene a feast,
And now is unrecoverable,
And us a slaunder aye durable ;
Wherefore, I say, as of counsaile,
In me is none that may availe,
But, if ye list, for remembraunce
Purvey and make such ordinaunce,
That the queene, that was so meke,
With all her women, dede or seke,
Might in your land a chappell have,
With some remembraunce of her grave,
Shewing her end with the pity,
In some notable old city,
Nigh unto an high way,
Where every wight might for her pray,
And for all hers that have ben trew ;"
And even with that she changed hew,
And twise wished after the death,
And sight, and thus passed her breath.
Than said the lords of the host,
And so conclude least and most,
That they would ever in houses of thacke
Their lives lead, and weare but blacke,
And forsake all their pleasaunces,
And turn all joy to penaunces,
And beare the dead prince to the barge,
And named them should have the charge;
And to the hearse where lay the queen,
The remenaunt went, and down on kneen,
Holding their honds on high, gon crie,
"Mercy, mercy," everich thrie,
And cursed the time that ever slouth
Should have such masterdome of trouth.

And to the barge a long mile,
They bare her forth, and in a while
All the ladies one and one,
By companies were brought echone,
And past the sea and tooke the land,
And in new herses on a sand,
Put and brought were all anon,
Unto a city closed with stone,
Where it had been used aye
The kings of the land to lay,
After they raigned in honours,
And writ was which were conquerours,
In an abbey of nunnes which were blake,
Which accustomed were to wake,
And of usage rise ech a night
To pray for every lives wight;
And so befell as in the guise,
Ordeint and said was the servise,
Of the prince and of the queen,
So devoutly as might been,
And after that about the herses,
Many orisons and verses,
Without note full softely,
Said were and that full heartily,
That all the night till it was day,
The people in the church con pray
Unto the holy Trinity,
Of these soules to have pity.
And whan the night past and ronne
Was, and the new day begonne,
The yong morrow with rayes red,
Which from the Sunne over all con spred,
Atempered clere was and faire,
And made a time of wholsome aire,
Befell a wonder case and strange,
Among the people and gan change
Soone the word and every woo
Unto a joy, and some to two:
A bird, all fedred blew and greene,
With bright rayes like gold betweene,
As small thred over every joynt,
All full of colour strange and coint,
Uncouth and wonderfull to sight,
Upon the queens herse con light,
And song full low and softely,
Three songs in her harmony,
Unletted of every wight,
Till, at the last, an aged knight
Which seemed a man in great thought
Like as he set all thing at nought,
With visage and eyen all forwept
And pale, as man long unslept,
By the herses as he stood
With hasty hondling of his hood
Unto a prince that by him past
Made the bridde somewhat agast,
Wherefore he rose and left his song,
And depart from us among,
And spread his wings for to passe
By the place he entred was,
And in his hast, shortly to tell,
Him hurt, that backeward downe he fell,
From a window richly peint
With lives of many divers seint,
And bet his wings and bled fast,
And of the hurt thus died and past,
And lay there well an houre and more,
Till, at the last, of briddes a score
Come and sembled at the place
Where the window broken was,
And made swiche waimentacioun,
That pity was to heare the soun,
And the warbles of their throtes,
And the complaint of their notes,
Which from joy cleane was reversed,
And of them one the glas soone persed,
And in his beke of colours nine,
An herbe he brought flourelesse, all greene,
Full of small leaves and plaine,
Swart and long with many a vaine,
And where his fellow lay thus dede,
This hearbe down laid by his hede,
And dressed it full softily,
And hong his head and stood thereby,
Which hearb, in lesse than halfe an houre,
Gan over all knit, and after floure
Full out and wexe ripe the seed,
And right as one another feed
Would, in his beake he tooke the graine,
And in his fellowes beake certaine
It put, and thus, within the third,
Up stood and pruned him the bird,
Which dead had be in all our sight,
And both togither forth their flight
Tooke singing from us, and their leve,
Was none disturb hem would ne greve;
And whan they parted were and gone
Th'abbesse the seeds soone echone
Gadred had, and in her hand
The herb she tooke, well avisand
The leafe, the seed, the stalke, the floure,
And said it had a good savour,
And was no common herb to find,
And well approved of uncouth kind,
And than other more vertuouse,
Who so have it might for to use
In his need, flowre, leafe, or graine,
Of their heale might be certaine;
And laid it downe upon the herse
Where lay the queene, and gan reherse,
Echone to other that they had seene,
And taling thus the sede wex greene,
And on the dry herse gan spring,
Which me thought a wondrous thing,
And after that floure and new seed,
Of which the people all tooke heed,
And said, it was some great miracle,
Or medicine fine more than triacle,
And were well done there to assay,
If it might ease in any way
The corses, which with torch light,
They waked had there all that night.
Soone did the lords there consent,
And all the people thereto content,
With easie words and little fare,
And made the queenes visage bare,
Which shewed was to all about,
Wherefore in swoone fell whole the rout,
And were so sory, most and least,
That long of weeping they not ceast,
For of their lord the remembraunce
Unto them was such displeasaunce,
That for to live they called a paine,
So were they very true and plaine;
And after this, the good abbesse
Of the graine gan chese and dresse
Three, with her fingers cleane and small,
And in the queenes mouth by tale,
One after other full easily,
She put and full conningly,

Which shewed soone such vertue,
That preved was the medicine true,
For with a smiling countenaunce
The queene uprose, and of usaunce,
As she was wont, to every wight
She made good cheere, for which sight
The people kneeling on the stones,
Thought they in Heaven were soule and bones:
And to the prince where he lay,
They went to make the same assay;
And whan the queene it understood,
And how the medicine was good,
She prayed she might have the graines
To releve him from the paines
Which she and he had both endured,
And to him went, and so him cured,
That within a little space,
Lusty and fresh on live he was
And in good hele, and hole of speech,
And lough, and said, "Gramercy leech,"
For which the joy throughout the toun,
So great was that the bels sown
Afraied the people, a journay
About the city every way,
And come and asked cause and why,
They rongen were so stately?
And after that the queene, th'abbesse
Made diligence, or they would cesse,
Such, that of ladies soone a rout
Shewing the queene was all about,
And called by name echone and told,
Was none forgotten young ne old;
There might men see joyes new,
Whan the medicine fine and trew,
Thus restored had every wight,
So well the queene as the knight,
Unto perfit joy and hele,
That fleting they were in such wele
As folke that would in no wise,
Desire more perfit paradise.
And thus, whan passed was the sorrow,
With mikel joy soone on the morrow,
The king, the queene, and every lord,
With all the ladies by one accord,
A generall assembly
Great cry through the country,
The which after as their intent
Was turned to a parliament,
Where was ordained and avised
Every thing and devised,
That please might to most and least,
And there concluded was the feast,
Within the yle to be hold
With full consent of young and old,
In the same wise as before,
As thing should be withouten more;
And shipped and thither went,
And into straunge realmes sent
To kings, queenes, and duchesses,
To divers princes and princesses,
Of their linage, and can pray
That it might like them at that day
Of mariage, for their sport,
Come see the yle and them disport,
Where should be jousts and turnaies,
And armes done in other waies,
Signifying over all the day,
After Aprill within May;
And was avised that ladies tweine,
Of good estate and well beseine,
With certaine knights and squiers,
And of the queenes officers,
In manner of an embassade,
With certain letters closed and made,
Should take the barge and depart,
And seeke my lady every part,
Till they her found for any thing,
Both charged have queene and king,
And as their lady and maistres,
Her to beseke of gentilnes,
At the day there for to been,
And oft her recommaund the queen,
And prayes for all loves to hast,
For, but she come, all woll be wast,
And the feast a businesse
Without joy or lustinesse:
And tooke them tokens and good speed
Praid God send, after their need.
Forth went the ladies and the knights,
And were out fourteene daies and nights,
And brought my lady in their barge,
And had well sped and done their charge;
Whereof the queene so hartily glad
Was, that, in soth, such joy she had
Whan the ship approched lond,
That she my lady on the sond
Met, and in armes so constraine,
That wonder was behold them twaine,
Which to my dome during twelve houres,
Neither for heat ne watry shoures,
Departed not no company,
Saving themselfe but none them by,
But gave them leisour at their ease,
To rehearse joy and disease,
After the pleasure and courages
Of their young and tender ages:
And after with many a knight
Brought were, where, as for that night,
They parted not, for to pleasaunce,
Content was herte and countenaunce
Both of the queene and my maistresse,
This was that night their businesse:
And on the morrow with huge rout,
This prince of lords him about,
Come and to my lady said
That of her comming glad and well apaid
He was, and full conningly
Her thanked and full heartily,
And lough and smiled, and said, "ywis,
That was in doubt in safety is:"
And commaunded do diligence,
And spare for neither gold ne spence,
But make ready, for on the morow
Wedded, with saint John to borrow,
He would be, withouten more,
And let them wite this lesse and more.
The morow come, and the service
Of mariage, in such a wise
Said was, that with more honour
Was never prince ne conquerour
Wedde, ne with such company
Of gentilnesse in chivalry,
Ne of ladies so great routs,
Ne so beseen, as all abouts
They were there, I certifie
You on my life withouten lie.
And the feast hold was in tentis,
As to tell you mine entent is,
In a rome, a large plaine
Under a wood in a champaine,

Betwixt a river and a welle,
Where never had abbay, ne selle
Ben, ne kirke, house, ne village,
In time of any mans age :
And dured three months the feast,
In one estate and never ceast,
From early the rising of the Sonne,
Till the day spent was and yronne,
In justing, dauncing, and lustinesse,
And all that sowned to gentilnesse.
And, as me thought, the second morrow,
Whan ended was all old sorrow,
And in surety every wight
Had with his lady slept a night,
The prince, the queene, and all the rest,
Unto my lady made request,
And her besought oft and praied
To mewards to be well apaied,
And consider mine old trouth,
And on my paines have routh,
And me accept to her servise,
In such forme and in such wise,
That we both might be as one,
Thus prayed the queene, and everichone :
And, for there should be no nay,
They stint justing all a day,
To pray my lady and requere
Be content and out of fere,
And with good herte make friendly cheare,
And said it was a happy yeare :
At which she smiled and said, ywis,
" I trow well he my servaunt is,
And would my welfare, as I trist,
So would I his, and would he wist
How, and I knew that his trouth
Continue would without slouth,
And be such as ye here report,
Restraining both courage and sport,
I couth consent at your request,
To be named of your fest,
And do after your usaunce,
In obeying your pleasaunce ;
At your request this I consent,
To please you in your entent,
And eke the soveraine above
Commanded hath me for to love,
And before other him prefer,
Against which prince may be no wer,
For his power over all raigneth,
That other would for nought him paineth,
And sith his will and yours is one,
Contrary in me shall be none."
Tho (as me thought) the promise
Of marriage before the mese
Desired was of every wight
To be made the same night,
To put away all maner douts
Of every wight thereabouts,
And so was do; and on the morrow,
Whan every thought and every sorrow
Dislodged was out of mine herte,
With every wo and every smert,
Unto a tent prince and princes,
Me thought, brought me and my maistres,
And said we were at full age
There to conclude our marriage,
With ladies, knights, and squiers,
And a great host of ministers,
With instruments and sounes diverse,
That long were here to rehearse,
Which tent was church perochiall,
Ordaint was in especiall,
For the feast and for the sacre,
Where archbishop, and archdiacre
Song full out the servise,
After the custome and the guise,
And the churches ordinaunce ;
And after that to dine and daunce
Brought were we, and to divers playes,
And for our speed ech with prayes,
And merry was most and least,
And said amended was the feast,
And were right glad lady and lord,
Of the marriage and th'accord,
And wished us hertes pleasaunce,
Joy, hele, and continuance,
And to the ministrils made request,
That in encreasing of the fest,
They would touch their cords,
And with some new joyeux accords,
Moove the people to gladnesse,
And praiden of all gentilnesse,
Ech to paine them for the day,
To shew his cunning and his play.
Tho began sownes mervelous
Entuned with accords joyous,
Round about all the tents,
With thousands of instruments,
That every wight to daunce them pained,
To be merry was none that fained,
Which sowne me troubled in my sleepe,
That fro my bed forth I lepe,
Wening to be at the feast,
But whan I woke all was ceast,
For there n'as lady ne creature,
Save on the wals old portraiture
Of horsmen, haukes, and hounds,
And hurt deere full of wounds,
Some like bitten, some hurt with shot,
And, as my dreame, seemed that was not ;
And whan I wake, and knew the trouth,
And ye had seen, of very routh,
I trow ye would have wept a weke,
For never man yet halfe so seke;
I went escaped with the life,
And was for fault that sword ne knife
I find ne might my life t'abridge,
Ne thing that kerved, ne had edge,
Wherewith I might my woful pains
Have voided with bleeding of my vains.
Lo, here my blisse, lo, here my paine,
Which to my lady I do complaine,
And grace and mercy her requere,
To end my wo and busie fere,
And me accept to her servise,
After her service in such avise,
That of my dreame the substaunce
Might turne once to cognisaunce,
And cognisaunce to very preve
By full consent and good leve,
Or els without more I pray,
That this night, or it be day,
I mote unto my dreame returne,
And sleeping so, forth aie sojourne
About the yle of pleasaunce,
Under my ladies obeisaunce,
In her servise, and in such wise,
As it please her may to devise,
And grace ones to be accept,
Like as I dreamed whan I slept,

And dure a thousand yeare and ten,
In her good will, amen, amen.

FAIREST of faire, and goodliest on live,
All my secret to you I plaine and shrive,
Requiring grace and of complaint,
To be healed or martyred as a saint,
For by my trouth I sweare, and by this booke,
Ye may both heale and slee me with a looke.

Go forth mine owne true herte innocent,
And with humblesse, do thine observaunce,
And to thy lady on thy knees present
Thy servise new, and think how great pleasance
It is to live under th'obeisance
Of her that may with her looks soft
Give thee the blisse that thou desirest oft.

Be diligent, awake, obey, and drede,
And not too wild of thy countenaunce,
But meeke and glad, and thy nature feed,
To do each thing that may her pleasance,
Whan thou shalt sleep, have aie in remembrance
Th'image of her which may with lookes soft
Give thee the blisse that thou desirest oft.

And if so be that thou her name find
Written in booke, or els upon wall,
Looke that thou, as servaunt true and kind,
Thine obeisaunce, as she were there withall;
Faining in love is breeding of a fall
From the grace of her, whose lookes soft
May give the blisse that thou desirest oft.

Yo that this ballade read shall,
I pray you keepe you from the fall.

THE FLOWER AND THE LEAF.

A gentlewoman out of an arbour in a grove, seeth a great companie of knights and ladies in a daunce upon the greene grasse: the which being ended, they all kneele downe, and do honour to the daisie, some to the flower, and some to the leafe. Afterward this gentlewoman learneth by one of these ladies the meaning hereof, which is this: They which honour the flower, a thing fading with every blast, are such as looke after beautie and worldly pleasure. But they that honour the leafe, which abideth with the root, notwithstanding the frosts and winter stormes, are they which follow vertue and during qualities, without regard of worldly respects.

---

v. 1—56

WHAN that Phebus his chair of gold so hie
Had whirled up the sterry sky aloft,
And in the Boole was entred certainly,
When shoures sweet of raine descended soft,
Causing the ground fele times and oft,
Up for to give many an wholsome aire,
And every plaine was clothed faire

With new greene, and maketh small floures
To springen here and there in field and in mede,
So very good and wholsome be the shoures,
That it renueth that was old and dede,
In winter time; and out of every sede
Springeth the hearbe, so that every wight
Of this season wexeth glad and light.

And I so glad of the season swete,
Was happed thus upon a certaine night,
As I lay in my bed, sleepe full unmete
Was unto me, but why that I ne might
Rest, I ne wist: for there n'as earthly wight
As I suppose had more herts ease
Than I; for I n'ad sicknesse nor disease.

Wherefore I mervaile greatly of my selfe,
That I so long withouten sleepe lay,
And up I rose three houres after twelfe,
About the springing of the day,
And on I put my geare and mine array,
And to a pleasaunt grove I gan passe,
Long er the bright Sunne up risen was.

In which were okes great, streight as a line,
Under the which the grasse so fresh of hew,
Was newly sprong, and an eight foot or nine
Every tree well fro his fellow grew,
With branches brode, laden with leves new,
That sprongen out ayen the sunne-shene,
Some very red, and some a glad light grene.

Which as me thought was right a pleasant sight,
And eke the briddes songe for to here,
Would have rejoiced any earthly wight,
And I that couth not yet in no manere
Heare the nightingale of all the yeare,
Ful busily herkened with herte and with eare,
If I her voice perceive coud any where.

And, at the last, a path of little brede
I found, that greatly had not used be,
For it forgrowen was with grasse and weede,
That well unneth a wighte might it se:
Thought I, this path some whider goth, parde;
And so I followed, till it me brought
To right a pleasaunt herber well ywrought,

That benched was, and with turfes new
Freshly turved, whereof the grene gras,
So small, so thicke, so short, so fresh of hew,
That most like unto green wool wot I it was:
The hegge also that yede in compas,
And closed in all the greene herbere,
With sicamour was set and eglatere;

Wrethen in fere so well and cunningly,
That every branch and leafe grew by mesure,
Plaine as a bord, of an height by and by,
I sie never thing I you ensure,
So well done; for he that tooke the cure
It to make ytrow, did all his peine
To make it passe all tho that men have seine.

And shapen was this herber roofe and all
As a prety parlour; and also
The hegge as thicke as a castle wall,
That who that list without to stond or go,
Though he would all day prien to and fro,
He should not see if there were any wight
Within or no; but one within well might

Perceive all tho that yeden there without
In the field, that was on every side
Covered with corn and grasse, that out of doubt,
Though one would seeke all the world wide,
So rich a fielde coud not be espide
On no coast, as of the quantity,
For of all good thing there was plenty.

And I that all this pleasaunt sight sie,
Thought sodainly I felt so sweet an aire
Of the eglentere, that certainely
There is no hert, I deme, in such dispaire,
Ne with thoughts froward and contraire,
So overlaid, but it should soone have bote,
If it had ones felt this savour sote.

And as I stood and cast aside mine eie,
I was ware of the fairest medler tree,
That ever yet in all my life I sie,
As full of blossomes as it might be,
Therein a goldfinch leaping pretile
Fro bough to bough; and, as him list, he eet
Here and there of buds and floures sweet.

And to the herber side was joyning
This faire tree, of which I have you told,
And at the last the brid began to sing,
Whan he had eaten what he eat wold;
So passing sweetly, that by manifold
It was more pleasaunt than i coud devise,
And whan his song was ended in this wise,

The nightingale with so merry a note
Answered him, that all the wood rong
So sodainly, that as it were a sote,
I stood astonied, so was I with the song
Thorow ravished, that till late and long,
I ne wist in what place I was, ne where;
And ayen, me thought, she song ever by mine ere.

Wherefore I waited about busily
On every side, if I her might see;
And, at the last, I gan full well aspy
Where she sat in a fresh grene laurer tree,
On the further side even right by me,
That gave so passing a delicious smell,
According to the eglentere full well.

Whereof I had so inly great pleasure,
That, as me thought, I surely ravished was
Into Paradise, where my desire
Was for to be, and no ferther passe
As for that day, and on the sote grasse
I sat me downe, for as for mine entent,
The birdes song was more convenient,

And more pleasaunt to me by many fold,
Than meat or drinke, or any other thing,
Thereto the herber was so fresh and cold,
The wholesome savours eke so comforting,
That, as I demed, sith the beginning
Of the world was never seene er than
So pleasaunt a ground of none earthly man.

And as I sat the birds harkening thus,
Me thought that I heard voices sodainly,
The most sweetest and most delicious
That ever any wight I trow truly
Heard in their life, for the armony
And sweet accord was in so good musike,
That the voice to angels most was like.

At the last, out of a grove even by,
That was right goodly and pleasaunt to sight,
I sie where there came singing lustily
A world of ladies; but, to tell aright
Their great beauty, it lieth not in my might,
Ne their array; nevertheless I shall
Tell you a part, though I speake not of all.

The surcotes white of velvet wele sitting,
They were in cladde; and the semes echone,
As it were a manere garnishing,
Was set with emerauds one and one,
By and by; but many a riche stone
Was set on the purfiles, out of dout,
Of colors, sleves, and traines round about.

As great pearles round and orient,
Diamonds fine, and rubies red,
And many another stone of which I went
The names now; and everich on her head
A rich fret of gold, which without dread
Was full of stately riche stones set,
And every lady had a chapelet

On her head of [branches] fresh and grene,
So wele wrought and so mervelously,
That it was a noble sight to sene,
Some of laurer, and some full pleasauntly
Had chapelets of woodbind, and sadly
Some of *agnus castus* were also
Chapelets fresh; but there were many of tho

That daunced, and eke song full soberly,
But all they yede in manner of compace,
But one there yede in mid the company,
Sole by her selfe, but all followed the pace
That she kepte, whose heavenly figured face
So pleasaunt was, and her wele shape person,
That of beauty she past hem everichon.

And more richly beseene, by many fold
She was also in every maner thing,
On her head full pleasaunt to behold,
A crowne of golde rich for any king,
A braunch of *agnus castus* eke bearing
In her hand; and to my sight truly,
She lady was of the company.

And she began a roundell lustely,
That "*Suse le foyle, devers moy,*" men call,
"*Siene et mon joly souer est endormy,*"
And than the company answered all,
With voices sweet entuned, and so small,
That me thought it the sweetest melody
That ever I heard in my life soothly.

And thus they came, dauncing and singing
Into the middes of the mede echone,
Before the herber where I was sitting,
And, God wot, me thought I was wel bigone,
For than I might avise hem one by one,
Who fairest was, who coud best dance or sing,
Or who most womanly was in all thing.

They had not daunced but a little throw,
Whan that I hearde ferre off sodainly,
So great a noise of thundering trumpes blow,
As though it should have departed the skie;
And after that within a while I sie,
From the same grove where the ladies come out,
Of men of armes comming such a rout,

As all the men on earth had been assembled
In that place, wele horsed for the nones,
Stering so fast, that all the earth trembled:
But for to speake of riches and [of] stones,
And men and horse, I trow the large wones,
Of Pretir John, ne all his tresory,
Might not unneth have boght the tenth party

Of their array: who so list heare more,
I shall rehearse, so as I can, a lite.
Out of the grove, that I spake of before,
I sie come first all in their clokes white,
A company, that ware for their delite,
Chapelets fresh of okes seriall,
Newly sprong, and trumpets they were all.

On every trumpe hanging a broad banere
Of fine tartarium were full richely bete,
Every trumpet his lords armes bere,
About their neckes with great pearles sete
Collers brode, for cost they would not lete,
As it would seem, for their schochones echone,
Were set about with many a precious stone.

Their horse harneis was all white also,
And after them next in one company,
Came kings of armes, and no mo,
In clokes of white cloth of gold richly;
Chapelets of greene on their heads on hie,
The crowns that they on their scochones bere,
Were set with pearle, ruby, and saphere,

And eke great diamondes many one;
But all their horse harneis and other geare
Was in a sute according everichone,
As ye have heard the foresaid trumpets were;
And by seeming they were nothing to lere,
And their guiding they did so manerly,
And after hem came a great company

Of heraudes and pursevauntes eke,
Arraied in clothes of white velvet,
And hardily they were no thing to seke,
How they on them should the harneis set;
And every man had on a chapelet;
Scochones and eke horse harneis indede,
They had in sute of hem that 'fore hem yede.

Next after hem came in armour bright
All save their heades, seemely knightes nine,
And every claspe and maile, as to my sight,
Of their harneis were of red golde fine,
With cloth of gold, and furred with ermine
Were the trappoures of their stedes strong,
Wide and large, that to the ground did hong.

And every bosse of bridle and paitrell
That they had, was worth, as I would wene,
A thousand pound; and on their heades well
Dressed were crownes of laurer grene,
The best made that ever I had sene,
And every knight had after him riding
Three henchemen on him awaiting.

Of which every [first] on a short tronchoun
His lordes helme bare, so richly dight,
That the worst was worthe the ransoun
Of [any] king; the second a shield bright
Bare at his backe; the thred bare upright
A mighty spere, full sharpe ground and kene,
And every childe ware of leaves grene

A fresh chapelet upon his haires bright;
And clokes white of fine velvet they ware,
Their steeds trapped and raied right
Without difference as their lordes were,
And after hem on many a fresh corsere,
There came of armed knights such a rout,
That they bespread the large field about.

And all they ware after their degrees
Chapelets newe made of laurer grene,
Some of [the] oke, and some of other trees,
Some in their honds bare boughes shene,
Some of laurer, and some of okes kene,
Some of hauthorne, and some of [the] woodbind,
And many mo which I had not in mind.

And so they came, their horses freshly stering,
With bloody sownes of hir trompes loud;
There sie I many an uncouth disguising
In the array of these knightes proud,
And at the last as evenly as they coud,
They took their places in middes of the mede,
And every knight turned his horses hede

To his fellow, and lightly laid a spere
In the rest; and so justes began
On every part about here and there;
Some brake his spere, some drew down hors and [man,
About the field astray the steedes ran;
And to behold their rule and governaunce,
I you ensure it was a great pleasaunce.

And so the justes last an houre and more;
But tho, that crowned were in laurer grene,
Wan the prise; their dints were so sore,
That there was none ayenst hem might sustene,
And the justing all was left off clene,
And fro their horse the ninth alight anone,
And so did all the remnant everichone.

And forth they yede togider, twain and twain,
That to behold it was a worthy sight,
Toward the ladies on the greene plain,
That song and daunced as I said now right:
The ladies as soone as they goodly might,
They brake of both the song and dance,
And yede to meet hem with ful glad semblaunce.

And every lady tooke full womanly
By the hond a knight, and forth they yede
Unto a faire laurer that stood fast by,
With leves lade the boughes of great brede;
And to my dome there never was indede
Man, that had seene halfe so faire a tre;
For underneath there might it well have be

An hundred persons at their owne plesaunce
Shadowed fro the heat of Phebus bright,
So that they should have felt no grevaunce
Of raine ne haile that hem hurte might,
The savour, eke, rejoice would any wight
That had be sicke or melancolious;
It was so very good and vertuous.

And with great reverence they enclined low
To the tree so soot and faire of hew;
And after that, within a little throw,
They began to sing and daunce of new,
Some song of love, some plaining of untrew,
Environing the tree that stood upright;
And ever yede a lady and a knight.

And at the last I cast mine eye aside,
And was ware of a lusty company
That came roming out of the field wide,
Hond in hond a knight and a lady;
The ladies all in surcotes, that richely
Purfiled were with many a rich stone,
And every knight of green ware mantles on,

Embrouded well so as the surcotes were,
And everich had a chapelet on her hed,
Which did right well upon the shining here,
Made of goodly floures white and red,
The knightes eke, that they in honde led,
In sute of hem ware chapelets everichone,
And before hem went minstrels many one,

As harpes, pipes, lutes, and sautry
Alle in greene; and on their heades bare
Of divers floures made full craftely,
All in a sute goodly chapelets they ware;
And so dauncing into the mede they fare,
In mid the which they found a tuft that was
All oversprad with floures in compas.

Whereto they enclined everichone
With great reverence, and that full humbly;
And, at the last, there began, anone,
A lady for to sing right womanly,
A bargaret in praising the daisie;
For as me thought among her notes swete,
She said "*Si douce est la Margarete.*"

Than they alle answered her in fere,
So passingly well, and so pleasauntly,
That it was a blisful noise to here,
But I n'ot how it happed, suddainly,
As about noone, the Sunne so fervently
Waxe hote, that the prety tender floures
Had lost the beauty of hir fresh coloures.

Forshronke with heat, the ladies eke to-brent,
That they ne wist where they hem might bestow;
The knightes swelt for lack of shade nie shent,
And after that, within a little throw,
The wind began so sturdily to blow,
That down goeth all the floures everichone,
So that in all the mede there left not one;

Save such as succoured were among the leves
Fro every storme that might hem assaile,
Growing under [the] hegges and thicke greves;
And after that, there came a storme of haile,
And raine in fere, so that withouten faile,
The ladies ne the knightes n'ade o threed
Drie on them, so dropping was hir weed.

And whan the storm was cleane passed away
Tho in white that stood under the tree,
They felt nothing of the great affray,
That they in greene without had in ybe,
To them they yede for routh and pite,
Them to comfort after their great disease,
So faine they were the helplesse for to ease.

Than I was ware how one of hem in grene
Had on a crowne rich and well sitting,
Wherefore I demed well she was a quene,
And tho in greene on her were awaiting;
The ladies then in white that were comming
Toward them, and the knights in fere
Began to comfort hem, and make hem chere.

The queen in white, that was of great beauty,
Took by the hond the queen that was in grene,
And said, "Suster, I have right great pity
Of your annoy, and of the troublous tene,
Wherein ye and your company have bene
So long, alas! and if that it you please
To go with me, I shall do you the ease,

"In all the pleasure that I can or may;"
Whereof the other humbly as she might,
Thanked her; for in right ill array
She was with storm and heat I you behight,
And every lady then anone right
That were in white, one of them took in grene
By the hond, which whan the knights had sene,

In like wise ech of them tooke a knight
Cladde in greene, and forth with hem they fare,
To an hegge, where they anon right,
To make their justs they would not spare
Boughes to hew down, and eke trees square,
Wherwith they made hem stately fires great,
To dry their clothes that were wringing weat.

And after that of hearbes that there grew,
They made for blisters of the Sunne brenning,
Very good and wholesome ointments new,
Where that they yede the sick fast anointing;
And after that they yede about gadering
Pleasaunt salades which they made hem eat,
For to refresh their great unkindly heat.

The lady of the Leafe than began to pray
Her of the Floure (for so to my seeming
They should be as by their array)
To soupe with her, and eke for any thing,
That she should with her all her people bring;
And she ayen in right goodly manere,
Thanketh her of her most friendly cheare,

Saying plainely, that she would obay
With all her hert all her commaundement;
And then, anon, without lenger delay
The lady of the Leafe hath one ysent
For a palfray, after her intent,
Arrayed well and faire in harneis of gold,
For nothing lacked, that to him long shold.

And after that to all her company
She made to purvey horse and every thing
That they needed, and than full lustily,
Even by the herber where I was sitting
They passed all so pleasantly singing,
That it would have comforted any wight;
But then I sie a passing wonder sight.

For then the nightingale, that all the day
Had in the laurer sate, and did her might
The whole service to sing longing to May,
All sodainly began to take her flight;
And to the lady of the Leafe forthright
She flew, and set her on her hond softly,
Which was a thing I marveled of greatly.

The goldfinch eke, that fro the medler tree
Was fled for heat into the bushes cold,
Unto the lady of the Flower gan flee,
And on her hond he set him as he wold,
And pleasauntly his winges gan to fold;
And for to sing they pained hem both as sore,
As they had do of all the day before.

And so these ladies rode forth a great pace,
And all the rout of knightes eke in fere;
And I that had seen all this wonder case,
Thought I would assay in some manere,
To know fully the trouth of this matere;
And what they were that rode so pleasantly:
And whan they were the herber passed by,

I drest me forth, and happed to mete, anone,
Right a faire lady, I do you ensure;
And she came riding by herselfe alone,
Alle in white, with semblance ful demure;
I salued her, and bad good aventure
Might her befall, as I coud most humbly;
And she answered, "My doughter, gramercy!"

"Madame," quoth I, "if that I durst enquere
Of you, I would faine of that company
Wite what they be that past by this arbere?"
And she ayen answered right friendly;
"My faire doughter, all tho that passed here by
In white clothing, be servaunts everichone
Unto the Leafe, and I my selfe am one.

"See ye not her that crowned is," quoth she,
"All in white?"—"Madame," quoth I, "yes:"
"That is Diane, goddesse of chastite,
And for because that she a maiden is,
In her hond the braunch she beareth this,
That *agnus castus* men call properly;
And all the ladies in her company,

"Which ye se of that hearbe chapelets weare,
Be such as han kept alway hir maidenheed:
And all they that of laurer chapelets beare,
Be such as hardy were and manly in deed,
Victorious name which never may be dede!
And all they were so worthy of hir hond,
In hir time that none might hem withstond.

"And tho that weare chapelets on their hede
Of fresh woodbind, be such as never were
To love untrue in word, thought, ne dede,
But aye stedfast, ne for pleasaunce, ne fere,
Though that they should their hertes all to-tere,
Would never flit but ever were stedfast,
Till that their lives there asunder brast."

"Now faire madame," quoth I, "yet I would pray
Your ladiship, if that it mighte be,
That I might knowe by some maner way,
Sith that it hath liked your beaute,
The trouth of these ladies for to tell me,
What that these knightes be in rich armour,
And what tho be in grene and weare the flour?

'And why that some did reverence to that tre,
And some unto the plot of floures faire?"
"With right good will my fair doughter," quoth she,
"Sith your desire is good and debonaire;
Tho nine crowned be very exemplaire,
Of all honour longing to chivalry,
And those certaine be called the Nine Worthy,

"Which ye may see [now] riding all before,
That in hir time did many a noble dede,
And for their worthines full oft have bore
The crowne of laurer leaves on their hede,
As ye may in your old bookes rede;
And how that he that was a conquerour,
Had by laurer alway his most honour.

"And tho that beare bowes in their hond
Of the precious laurer so notable,
Be such as were, I woll ye understond,
Noble knightes of the round table,
And eke the Douseperis honourable,
Which they beare in signe of victory;
It is witnesse of their deeds mightily.

"Eke there be knightes old of the garter,
That in hir time did right worthily,
And the honour they did to the laurer,
Is for by it they have their laud wholly,
Their triumph eke, and martiall glory;
Which unto them is more parfite richesse,
Than any wight imagine can or gesse.

"For one leafe given of that noble tree
To any wight that hath done worthily,
And it be done so as it ought to be,
Is more honour than any thing earthly;
Witnes of Rome that founder was truly
Of all knighthood and deeds marvelous,
Record I take of Titus Livius.

"And as for her that crowned is in greene,
It is Flora, of these floures goddesse,
And all that here on her awaiting beene,
It are such folk that loved idlenesse,
And not delite in no businesse,
But for to hunt and hauke, and pley in medes,
And many other suchlike idle dedes.

And for the great delite and pleasaunce
They have to the floure, and so reverently
They unto it do such obeisaunce
As ye may se."—"Now faire Madame," quoth I,
"If I durst aske what is the cause and why,
That knightes have the ensigne of honour,
Rather by the leafe than the flour?"

"Soothly doughter," quod she, "this is the trouth;
For knightes ever should be persevering,
To seeke honour without feintise or slouth;
Fro wele to better in all manner thing;
In signe of which with leaves aye lasting,
They be rewarded after their degre,
Whose lusty green May may not appaired be,

"But aie keping their beautie fresh and greene,
For there n'is storme that may hem deface,
Haile nor snow, winde nor frosts kene,
Wherfore they have this property and grace;
And for the floure, within a little space
Woll be [all] lost, so simple of nature
They be, that they no greevance may endure.

"And every storme will blow them soone away,
Ne they last not but for a season;
That is the cause, the very trouth to say,
That they may not by no way of reason
Be put to no such occupation."
"Madame," quoth I, "with all mine whole servise
I thanke you now, in my most humble wise,

"For now I am ascertained throughly,
Of every thing [that] I desired to know."
"I am right glad that I have said sothly,
Ought to your pleasure, if ye will me trow,"
Quod she ayen, "but to whom do ye owe
Your service? and which will ye honour,
Tel me I pray, this yere? the Leafe or the Flour?"

"Madame," quoth I, "though I least worthy,
Unto the Leafe I owe mine observaunce:"
"That is," quod she, "right well done certainly;
And I pray God to honour you avaunce,
And kepe you fro the wicked remembraunce
Of Malebouch, and all his crueltie,
And all that good and well conditioned be.

"For here may I no lenger now abide,
I must follow the great company,
That ye may see yonder before you ride."
And forth as I couth most humbly,
I tooke my leve of her, as she gan hie,
After them as fast as ever she might,
And I drow homeward, for it was nigh night.

And put all that I had seene in writing,
Under support of them that lust it to rede.
O little booke, thou art so unconning,
How darst thou put thy self in prees for drede?
It is wonder that thou wexest not rede!
Sith that thou wost full lite who shall behold
Thy rude langage, full boistously unfold.

EXPLICIT.

THE LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN.

v. 1—71

PROLOGUE.

A THOUSAND times I have heard men tell,
That there is joy in Heaven, and pain in Hell,
And I accord it wele that it is so,
But nathelesse yet wote I wele also,
That there n'is non dwelling in this countre,
That either hath in Heaven or in Hell ybe,
Ne may of it none other waies witten,
But as he heard sayd, or found it written,
For by assay there may no man it preve.
But God forbede but men should leve
Wel more thing than they have seen with eye,
Men shall nat wenen every thing a lie
But if himself he seeth, or els it dooth,
For, God wote, thing is never the lesse soth,
Though every wight ne may it not ysee.
Bernarde the monke ne saugh all, parde,
Than mote we to bookes that we find,
(Through which that old things ben in mind)
And to the doctrine of the old wise,
Yeve credence, in every skilful wise,
That tellen of the old appreved stories,
Of holines, of reignes, of victories,
Of love, of hate, and other sundry things,
Of which I may not make rehearsings:
And if that old bookes were away,
Ylorne were of all remembraunce the kay.
Well ought us than, honouren and beleve
These bookes, there we han none other preve.
And as for me, though that I can but lite,
On bookes for to rede I me delite,
And to hem yeve I faith and full credence,
And in mine herte have hem in reverence
So hertely, that there is game none,
That fro my bookes maketh me to gone,
But it be seldome on the holy daie,
Save certainly, whan that the month of May
Is comen, and that I heare the foules sing,
And that the floures ginnen for to spring,
Farwell my booke, and my devotion.
Now have I than eke this condition,
That of all the floures in the mede,
Than love I most these floures white and rede,
Soch that men callen daisies in our toun,
To hem I have so great affectioun,
As I sayd erst, whan comen is the May,
That in my bedde there daweth me no day,
That I nam up and walking in the mede,
To seen this floure ayenst the Sunne sprede,
Whan it up riseth early by the morrow,
That blisfull sight softeneth all my sorow,
So glad am I, whan that I have presence
Of it, to done it all reverence,
As she that is of all floures the floure,
Fulfilled of all vertue and honoure,
And every ylike faire, and fresh of hewe,
And ever I love it, and ever ylike newe,
And ever shall, till that mine herte die,
All sweare I not, of this I woll not lie.
There loved no wight hotter in his life,
And whan that it is eve I renne blithe,
As sone as ever the Sunne ginneth west,
To seen this floure, how it woll go to rest,
For feare of night, so hateth she derkenesse,
Her chere is plainly spred in the brightnesse
Of the Sunne, for there it woll unclose:
Alas, that I ne had English rime, or prose
Suffisaunt this floure to praise aright,
But helpeth ye, that han conning and might,
Ye lovers, that can make of sentement,
In this case ought ye be diligent,
To forthren me somewhat in my labour,

Whether ye been with the lefe or with the flour,
For well I wote, that ye han here beforne
Of making ropen, and had alway the corne,
And I come after, glening here and there,
And am full glad if I may find an eare,
Of any goodly worde that ye han left,
And though it happen me to rehearsen eft,
That ye han in your freshe songes sayd,
Forbeareth me, and beth not evill apayd,
Sith that ye se, I doe it in the honour
Of love, and eke of service of the flour,
Whom that I serve, as I have wit or might,
She is the clerenesse and the very light,
That in this derke world me wint and ledeth ;
The herte within my sorowfull brest you dredeth,
And loveth so sore, that ye ben verily
The maistres of my wit, and nothing I,
My word, my workes, is knit so in your bonde
That as an harpe obeieth to the honde,
And make it soune after his fingering,
Right so mowe ye out of mine herte bring,
Soch voice, right as you list, to laugh or pain ;
Be ye my guide, and lady soverain !
As to mine yearthly God, to you I call,
Both in this werke, and my sorowes all.
But wherefore that I spake to yeve credence
To old stories, and done hem reverence,
And that men musten more thing bileve
That men may seen at eye or els preve,
That shall I sein, whan that I see my time,
I may nat all atones speake in rime ;
My busie ghost, that thursteth alway new,
To seen this flour so yong, so fresh of hew,
Constrained me, with so gredy desire,
That in my herte I fele yet the fire,
That made me rise ere it were day,
And this was now the first morow of May,
With dreadfull herte and glad devotion
For to been at the resurrection
Of this floure, whan that it should unclose
Again the Sunne, that rose as redde as rose,
That in the brest was of the beast that day,
That Angenores daughter ladde away :
And doune on knees, anon, right I me sette,
And as I could, this fresh floure I grette,
Kneeling alway, till it unclosed was,
Upon the small, soft, swete gras,
That was with floures swete embrouded all,
Of such swetenesse, and soch odour over all,
That for to speake of gomme, herbe, or tree,
Comparison may not ymaked be,
For it surmounteth plainly all odoures,
And of riche beaute of floures :
Forgotten had the yearth his poore estate
Of Winter, that him naked made and mate,
And with his sword of cold so sore greved ;
Now hath the attempre sunne al that releved
That naked was, and clad it new again ;
The small foules of the season fain,
That of the panter and the net been scaped,
Upon the fouler, that hem made awhaped
In Winter, and destroied had hir brood,
In his dispite hem thought it did hem good
To sing of him, and in hir song dispise
The foule chorle, that for his covetise,
Had hem betraied with his sophistrie,
This was hir song, "The fouler we defie,
And all his craft :" and some songen clere,
Laies of love, that joy it was to here,
In worshipping and prayaing of hir make,
And for the new blisfull Somers sake,
Upon the braunches full of blosmes soft,
In hir dilite, they tourned hem ful oft,
And songen, "Blissed be Sainct Valentine,
For on his day I chese you to be mine,
Withouten repenting mine herte swete ;"
And therewithall hir bekes gonnen mete,
Yelding honour, and humble obeisaunce
To love, and didden hir other observaunce
That longeth unto love, and unto nature,
Constrewe that as you list, I do no cure :
And tho that had done unkindnesse,
As doeth the tidife, for new fanglenesse,
Besought mercy of hir trespasing,
And humbly song hir repenting,
And sworen on the blosmes to be true,
So that hir makes would upon hem rue,
And at the last maden hir acorde,
All found they Daunger for the time a lord,
Yet Pite, through his strong gentill might,
Foryave, and made Mercy passen right
Through Innocence, and ruled Curtesie :
But I ne cleape it nat innocence folie,
Ne false pite, for vertue is the meane,
As eticke sayth, in soch maner I meane.
And thus these foule, voide of all malice,
Acordeden to love, and laften vice
Of hate, and song all of one acorde,
"Welcome Sommer, our governour and lorde."
And Zephirus, and Flora gentelly,
Yave to the floures soft and tenderly,
Hir swote breth, and made hem for to sprede,
As god and goddesse of the flourie mede,
In which me thoughte I might day by day,
Dwellen alway, the joly month of May,
Withouten slepe, withouten meat or drinke :
Adowne full softly I gan to sinke,
And leaning on my elbow and my side,
The long day I shope me for to abide,
For nothing els, and I shall nat lie,
But for to looke upon the daisie,
That well by reason men it call may
The daisie, or els the eye of the day,
The emprise, and floure of floures all,
I pray to God that faire mote she fall,
And all that loven floures, for her sake :
But nathelesse, ne wene nat that I make
In praising of the floure againe the lefe,
No more than of the corne againe the shefe :
For as to me n'is lever none ne lother,
I n'am witholden yet with never nother,
Ne I not who serveth lefe, ne who the floure,
Well brouken they hir service or laboure,
For this thing is all of another tonne,
Of old storie, er soch thing was begonne.
Whan that the Sunne out the south gan west,
And that this floure gan close, and gan to rest,
For derknes of the night, the which she dred,
Home to mine house full swiftly I me sped
To gone to rest, and earely for to rise,
To seene this floure to sprede, as I devise,
And in a little herber that I have,
That benched was on turves fresh ygrave,
I bad men shoulde me my couche make,
For deintie of the newe Sommers sake,
I bad hem strawen floures on my bedde ;
Whan I was laid, and had mine eyen hedde,
I fell a slepe, and slept an houre or two,
Me met how I lay in the medow tho,
To seen this floure, that I love so and drede,

And from a ferre came walking in the mede
The god of love, and in his hand a queene,
And she was clad in royall habite grene,
A fret of golde she had next her heere,
And upon that a white croune she beare,
With flourouns small, and I shall not lie,
For all the world right as a daisie
Ycrouned is, with white leaves lite,
So were the florouns of her croune white,
For of o perle fine orientall,
Her white croune was ymaked all,
For which the white croune above the grene
Made her like a daisie for to seme,
Considred eke her fret of gold above:
Yclothed was this mighty god of love
In silke, embroided full of grene greves,
In which a fret of redde rose leves,
The freshest sens the world was first begun;
His gilt heere was crouned with a sun,
In stede of gold, for hevinesse and weight,
Therwith, me thought, his face shone so bright
That well unnethes might I him behold,
And in his hand, me thought, I saw him hold
Two firie dartes, as the gledes rede,
And angelike his winges saw I sprede:
And all be that men sain that blinde is he,
Algate, me thought, that he might se,
For sternely on me he gan behold,
So that his loking doeth mine herte cold,
And by the hand he held this noble queene,
Crouned with white, and clothed al in greene,
So womanly, so benigne, and so meke,
That in this worlde though that men wold seke,
Halfe her beaute should they not finde
In creature that formed is by kinde,
And therfore may I sain as thinketh me,
This song in praising of this lady fre.

"Hide, Absolon, thy gilte tresses clere,
Hester lay thou thy mekenesse all adoun,
Hide, Jonathas, all thy frendly manere,
Penelopee, and Marcia Catoun,
Make of your wifehode no comparisoun,
Hide your beauties, Isoude and Helein,
My lady cometh, that all this may distain.

"Thy faire body let it not appere,
Lavine, and thou Lucrece of Rome toun,
And Polixene, that boughten love so dere,
And Cleopatras, with all thy passioun,
Hide your trouthe of love, and your renoun,
And thou Tisbe, that hast of love such pain,
My lady commeth, that all this may distain.

"Hero, Dido, Laodomia, al yfere,
And Phillis, hanging for Demophoun,
And Canace, espied by thy chere,
Hipsiphile betrayed with Jasoun,
Maketh of your trouth neither boste ne soun,
Nor Hipermistre, or Ariadne, ye twain,
My lady cometh, that all this may distain."

This balade may full well ysongen be,
As I have sayd erst, by my lady fre,
For certainly, all these mowe not suffice,
To apperen with my lady in no wise,
For as the Sunne woll the fire distain,
So passeth all my lady soverain,
That is so good, so faire, so debonaire,
I pray to God that ever fall her faire,
For nad comforte ben of her presence,
I had ben dead, withouten any defence,
For drede of Loves wordes, and his chere,
As whan time is, hereafter ye shall here.
Behind this god of love upon the grene,
I saw coming of ladies ninetene,
In roiall habit, a full easie pace,
And after hem came of women such a trace,
That sens that God Adam had made of yerth,
The third part of mankinde, or the ferth,
Ne wende I nat by possibilite,
Had ever in this wide world ybe,
And true of love, these women were echon:
Now, whether was that a wonder thing or non,
That right anon, as that they gonne espye
This floure, which that I clepe the daysie,
Full sodainly they stinten all at ones,
And kneled doune, as it were for the nones,
And songen with o voice, "Heale and honour
To trouth of womanhede, and to this flour,
That beareth our alderprise in figuring,
Her white croune beareth the witnessing."
And with that word, a compas environn,
They sitten hem ful softely adoun:
First sat the god of love, and sith his queene,
With the white croune, clad all in grene,
And sithen al the remnaunt by and by,
As they were of estate, full curtesly,
Ne nat a worde was spoken in the place
The mountenance of a furlong way of space.
I, kneling by this floure, in good entent
Abode to knowen what this people ment,
As still as any stone, till, at the last,
This god of love, on me his eyen cast,
And said, "Who kneleth there?" and I answerde
Unto his asking, whan that I it herde,
And sayd, "Sir, it am I," and come him nere,
And salued him: quod he, "What doest thou here
So nigh mine owne floure, so boldly?
It were better worthy truely,
A worme to nighen nere my floure than thou."
"And why sir," quod I, "and it like you?"
"For thou," quod he, "art therto nothing able,
It is my relike, digne and delitable,
And thou my fo, and all my folke werriest,
And of mine old servaunts thou missaiest,
And hindrest hem with thy translation,
And lettest folke from hir devocion,
To serve me, and holdest it folie
To serve Love, thou mayst it nat denie,
For in plain text, withouten nede of glose,
Thou hast translated the Romaunt of the Rose,
That is an heresie ayenst my law,
And makest wise folke fro me withdraw;
And of Creseide, thou hast said as the list,
That maketh men to women lesse trist,
That ben as trewe as ever was any stele:
Of thine answere avise thee right wele,
For though thou renied hast my lay,
As other wretches have done many a day,
By seint Venus, that my mother is,
If that thou live, thou shalt repenten this,
So cruelly, that it shall well be sene."
Tho spake this lady, clothed all in greene,
And saied, "God, right of your curtesie,
Ye mote herken if he can replie
Ayenst all this that ye have to him meved;
A God ne shulde nat be thus agreved,
But of his deite he shal be stable,
And there gracious and merciable:
And if ye n'ere a God that knowen all,

Than might it be as I you tellen shall,
This man to you may falsely ben accused,
That as by right him ought ben excused,
For in your court is many a losengeour,
And many a queinte totoler accusour,
That tabouren in your eares many a soun,
Right after hir imaginatioun,
To have your daliaunce, and for envie,
These ben the causes, and I shall nat lie,
Envie is lavender of the court alway,
For she ne parteth neither night ne day,
Out of the house of Cæsar, thus saith Dant,
Who so that goeth algate she wol nat want.
" And eke, peraunter, for this man is nice,
He might done it, gessing no malice,
But for he useth thinges for to make,
Him recketh nought of what mater he take,
Or him was boden make thilke twey,
Of some persone, and durst it nat withsey:
Or him repenteth utterly of this,
He ne hath nat done so grevously amis,
To translaten that old clerkes writen,
As though that he of malice would enditen,
Dispite of Love, and had himself it wrought:
This shold a rightwise lord have in his thought,
And nat be like tiraunts of Lombardie,
That han no reward but at tyrannie,
For he that king or lorde is naturell,
Him ought nat be tiraunt ne cruell,
As is a fermour, to done the harme he can,
He must thinke it is his liege man,
And is his tresour, and his gold in cofer,
This is the sentence of the philosopher:
A king, to kepe his lieges in justice,
Withouten doute that is his office,
All woll he kepe his lordes in hir degree,
As it is right and skil, that they bee
Enhaunsed and honoured, and most dere,
For they ben halfe goddes in this world here,
Yet mote he done both right to poore and riche,
All be that hir estate be nat both yliche,
And have of poore folke compassion,
For lo, the gentill kinde of the lion,
For whan a flie offendeth him or biteth,
He with his taile away the flie smiteth,
Al easily, for of his gentrie
Him deineth nat to wreke him on a flie,
As doeth a curre, or els another beest;
In noble corage ought ben areest,
And waien every thing by equite,
And ever have regard unto his owne degre:
For, sir, it is no maistrie for a lord
To dampne a man, without answere of word,
And for a lorde, that is full foule to use;
And it so be, he may him nat excuse,
But asketh mercy with a dreadfull herte,
And profereth him, right in his bare sherte,
To ben right at your owne judgement,
Than ought a God by short avisement,
Consider his owne honour, and his trespace,
For sith no cause of death lieth in this case,
You ought to ben the lightlier merciable,
Letteth your ire, and bethe somewhat tretable:
The man hath served you of his conninges,
And forthred well your law in his makinges,
All be it that he can nat well endite,
Yet hath he made leude folke delite
To serve you, in preising of your name,
He made the boke, that hight, the House of Fame,
And eké the Death of Blaunche the Duchesse,
And the Parliament of Foules, as I gesse,
And al the Love of Palamon and Arcite
Of Thebes, though the storie is knowen lite,
And many an himpne, for your holy daies,
That highten Balades, Rondels, Virelaies;
And for to speake of other holinesse,
He hath in prose translated Boece,
And made the Life also of Saint Cecile:
He made also, gone is a great while,
Origenes upon the Maudelaine:
Him ought now to have the lesse paine,
He hath made many a ley, and many a thing.
" Now as ye be a God, and eke a king,
I your Alceste, whilom quene of Trace,
I aske you this man right of your grace,
That ye him never hurt in al his live,
And he shal swearen to you, and that blive,
He shal never more agilten in this wise,
But shal maken as ye woll devise,
Of women trewe in loving al hir life,
Where so ye woll, of maiden or of wife,
And forthren you as much as he misseide,
Or in the Rose, or eles in Creseide."
The god of love answerde her thus anon,
" Madame," quod he, " it is so long agon,
That I you knew, so charitable and trewe,
That never yet, sens the world was newe,
To me ne found I better none than ye,
If that I woll save my degree:
I may nor woll nat werne your request,
Al lieth in you, doth with him as you lest.
" I al foryeve withouten lenger space,
For who so yeveth a yefte or doth a grace,
Do it betime, his thanke shall be the more;
And demeth ye what ye shal do therfore!
" Go thanke now my lady here," quod he.
I rose, and doun I set me on my knee,
And said thus: " Madame, the God above
Foryelde you that the god of love
Have maked me his wrath to foryeve,
And grace so longe for to live,
That I may know sothely what ye be,
That have me holpen, and put in this degre:
But trewly I wende, as in this caas
Nought have a gilte, ne done to love trespas,
For why? a trewe man withouten drede
Hath nat to parten with a theves dede.
" Ne a trewe lover ought me nat to blame,
Though that I speke a false lover some shame:
They ought rather with me for to hold,
For that I of Creseide wrote or told,
Or of the Rose, what so mine author ment,
Algate, God wotte, it was mine entent
To forthren trouth in love, and it cherice,
And to ben ware fro falsenesse and fro vice,
By which ensample, this was my mening."
And she answerde, " Let be thine arguing,
For love ne wol not counterpleted be,
In right ne wrong, and lerne that of me:
Thou hast thy grace, and hold the right thereto:
Now woll I saine what penance thou shalt do
For thy trespace, understand it here:
Thou shalt while that thou livest, yere by yere,
The most partie of thy time spende,
In making of a glorious legende,
Of good women, maidenes and wives,
That weren trewe in loving all hir lives.
And tell of false men that hem betraien,
That al hir life ne do nat but assaien
How many women they may done a shame,

For in your world that is now hold a game:
And though thee like nat a lover be,
Speke wel of love, this penance yeve I thee,
And to the god of love I shal so pray,
That he shal charge his servaunts by any way,
To forthren thee, and wel thy labour quite,
Go now thy waie, this penaunce is but lite:
And whan this boke is made, yeve it the quene
On my behalfe, at Eltham, or at Shene."
The god of love gan smile, and than he said:
"Wost thou," quod he, "where this be wife or maid,
Or queene, or countesse, or of what degree,
That hath so littell penaunce yeven thee,
That hast deserved sore for to smart,
But pite renneth sone in gentle herte:
That maist thou sene, she kitheth what she is."
And I answerde, "Naie, sir, so have I blis,
No more, but that I see well she is good."
"That is a trewe tale, by mine hood,"
Quod Love, "and thou knowest wel, parde,
If it be so that thou avise the:
Hast thou nat in a booke in thy cheste,
The great goodnesse of the quene Alceste,
That turned was into a dayesie,
She that for her husband chese to die,
And eke to gone to Hell, rather than he,
And Hercules rescued her, parde,
And brought her out of Hel againe to blis?"
And I answerde againe, and said "Yes,
Now know I her, and is this good Alceste,
The dayesie, and mine owne hertes reste?
Now fele I well the goodnesse of this wife,
That both after her death, and in her life,
Her great bounte doubleth her renoun,
Wel hath she quit me mine affectioun,
That I have to her floure the dayesie,
No wonder is though Jove her stellifie,
As telleth Agaton, for her great goodnesse,
Her white corowne beareth of it witnesse:
For all so many vertues had she,
As smal florounes in her corowne be,
In remembraunce of her, and in honour,
Cibylla made the dayesie and the floure,
Ycrowned al with white, as men may se,
And Mars yave to her a corowne reed, parde,
In stede of rubies set among the white:"
Therewith this quene woxe red for shame alite,
Whan she was praysed so in her presence,
Than said Love, "A full great negligence
Was it to thee, that ilke time thou made,
'Hide Absolon thy tresses,' in balade,
That thou forget in thy songe to sette,
Sith that thou art so greatly in her dette,
And wost well that kalender is she
To any woman, that woll lover be:
For she taught all the craft of trewe loving,
And namely of wifehode the living,
And all the bondes that she ought keepe;
Thy litel witte was thilke time asleepe:
But now I charge thee upon thy life,
That in thy legende thou make of this wife,
Whan thou hast other smale ymade before:
And fare now well, I charge thee no more,
But er I go, thus much I will the tell,
Ne shal no trewe lover come in Hell.
"These other ladies sitting here a rowe,
Ben in thy balade, if thou const hem know,
And in thy bokes al thou shalt hem find,
Have hem now in thy legende al in mind,
I meane of hem that ben in thy knowing,
For here ben twenty thousand mo sitting
Than thou knowest, good women all,
And trewe of love, for ought that may befall:
Make the metres of hem as thee lest,
I mote gone home, the Sunne draweth west,
To Paradis, with all this companie,
And serve alway the fresh dayesie.
At Cleopatras I woll that thou begin,
And so forth, and my love so shalt thou win;
For let see now, what man, that lover be,
Wol done so strong a paine for love as she.
I wote well that thou maist nat all it rime,
That suche lovers did in hir time:
It were too long to reden and to here,
Suffiseth me thou make in this manere,
That thou reherce of al her life the great,
After these old authours listen for to treat,
For who so shall so many a story tell,
Sey shortely or he shall too longe dwell:"
And with that worde my bookes gan I take,
And right thus on my legende gan I make.

THUS ENDETH THE PROLOGUE.

HERE BEGINNETH

THE LEGENDE OF CLEOPATRAS,

Queene of Egypt.

After the death of Ptholome the king,
That all Egypt had in his governing,
Reigned his queene Cleopataras,
Till on a time bifel there such a caas,
That out of Rome was sent a senatour,
For to conqueren realmes and honour,
Unto the toune of Rome, as was usaunce,
To have the world at her obeisaunce,
And soth to say, Antonius was his name,
So fil it, as fortune him ought a shame,
Whan he was fallen in prosperite,
Rebel unto the toune of Rome is he,
And over al this, the suster of Cesare
He left her falsely, er that she was ware,
And would algates han another wife,
For which he toke with Rome and Cesar strife.
Nathelesse, forsoth, this ilke senatour,
Was a full worthy gentill werriour,
And of his deth it was ful great damage,
But Love had brought this man in such a rage
And him so narow bounden in his laas,
And all for the love of Cleopatras,
That al the world he set at no value,
Him thought there was nothing to him so due,
As Cleopatras for to love and serve;
Him thought that in armes for to sterve
In the defence of her, and of her right.
This noble quene, eke loved so this knight,
Through his desert, and for his chevalrie,
As certainly, but if that bokes lie,
He was of person, and of gentilnesse,
And of discretion, and of hardinesse,
Worthy to any wight that liven may,
And she was faire, as is the rose in May;
And, for to maken shorte is the best,
She woxe his wife, and had him as her lest.
The wedding and the feast to devise,
To me that have ytake such emprise,
And so many a storie for to make,
It were to longe, lest that I should slake

g that beareth more effect and charge,
n may overlade a ship or barge,
rthy, to effect than woll I skippe,
the remnaunt I woll let it slippe.
vian, that wood was of this dede,
him an hooste on Antony to lede,
rly for his destruction,
toute Romaines, cruell as lion;
) they went, and thus I let hem saile.
nius was ware, and woll nat faile
en with these Romaines, if he may,
ke his rede, and both upon a day,
fe and he, and all his host forth went
) anone, no lenger they ne stent,
the see it happed hem to mete;
th the trumpe, and for to shoute and shete,
ainen hem to set on with the Sunne,
grisly sown out goeth the great gunne,
ertely they hurtlen in all at ones,
o the top doune cometh the great stones,
h the grapenel so full of crokes,
the ropes ran the shering hokes,
1 the polaxe preaseth he and he,
l the maste beginneth he to flee,
it againe, and driveth him over borde,
keth him upon his spearcs orde,
it the saile with hookes like a sith,
ngeth the cup, and biddeth hem be blith,
ireth peesen upon the hatches slider,
ottes full of lime, they gone togider,
ius the longe day in fight they spend,
the last, as every thing hath end,
is shent, and put him to the flight,
l his folke to go, that best go might,
eke the quene, with all her purple saile,
rokes which that went as thicke as haile,
nder was, she might it nat endure:
than that Antony saw that aventure,
" quod he, "the day that I was borne,
rship in this day thus have I lorne,"
r dispaire out of his wit he start,
ofe himselfe, anon, throughout the herte,
at he ferther went out of the place:
fe, that could of Cesar have no grace,
ipt is fled, for drede and for distresse,
rkeneth ye that speken of kindnesse.
men that falsely swearen many an oth,
e woll die if that your love be wroth,
may ye seene of women such a trouth.
roful Cleopatra had made such routh,
here n'is tonge none that may it tell,
1 the morow she woll no lenger dwell,
ade her subtill werkmen make a shrine
the rubies and the stones fine
Egipt that she coulde espie,
ut full the shrine of spiceric,
t the corse enbaume, and forth she fette
ead corse, and in the shrine it shette,
ext the shrine a pit than doth she grave,
ll the serpentes that she might have,
it hem in that grave, and thus she seid:
love, to whom my sorowfull herte obeid,
forthly, that fro that blisfull hour
I you swore to ben all freely your,
ne you, Antonius my knight,
iever waking in the day or night,
ere out of mine hertes remembraunce,
ele or wo, for carole, or for daunce,
1 my selfe this covenaunt made I tho,
right such as ye felten wele or wo.
As ferforth as it in my power lay,
Unreprovable unto my wifehood aye,
The same would I felen, life or death,
And thilke covenaunt while me lasteth breath
I woll fulfill, and that shall well be seene,
Was never unto her love a truer queene:"
And with that word, naked, with full good herte,
Among the serpents in the pit she start,
And there she chese to have her burying.
Anone the neders gonne her for to sting,
And she her death receiveth with good chere,
For love of Antony that was her so dere.
And this is storiall, sooth it is no fable:
Now ere I find a man thus true and stable,
And woll for love his death so freely take,
I pray God let our hedes never ake.

THE LEGEND OF TISBE OF BABILON.

At Babiloine whylome fill it thus,
The whiche toun the queen Simiramus
Let dichen al about, and walles make
Full hie, of harde tiles well ybake:
There were dwelling in this noble toun,
Two lordes, which that were of great renoun,
And woneden so nigh upon a grene,
That there nas but a stone wal hem between,
As oft in great tounes is the wonne:
And sothe to saine, that one man had a sonne,
Of all that lond one of the lustiest,
That other had a doughter, the fairest
That estward in the world was tho dwelling;
The name of everiche gan to other spring,
By women that were neighbours aboute,
For in that countre yet withouten doute,
Maidenes ben ykept for jelousie
Ful straite, lest they didden some folie.
This yonge man was cleped Piramus,
Thisbe hight the maide, (Naso saith thus)
And thus by report was hir name yshove,
That as they woxe in age, so woxe hir love:
And certaine, as by reason of hir age,
Ther might have ben betwixt hem mariage,
But that hir fathers n'olde it nat assent,
And bothe in love ylike sore they brent,
That none of all hir friendes might it lette,
But prively sometime yet they mette
By sleight, and spaken some of hir desire,
As wrie the glede and hotter is the fire,
Forbid a love, and it is ten times so wode.
This wal, which that betwixt hem both stode,
Was cloven atwo, right fro the top adoun,
Of old time, of his foundatioun,
But yet this clift was so narrow and lite
It was nat seene, dere inough a mite,
But what is that, that love cannot espie?
Ye lovers two, if that I shall not lie,
Ye founden first this little narrow clift,
And with a sound, as soft as any shrift,
They let hir wordes through the clifte pace,
And tolden, while that they stoden in the place,
All hir complaint of love, and all hir wo,
At every time whan they durst so.
On that one side of the wall stood he,
And on that other side stood Tisbe,
The sweet soune of other to receive,
And thus hir wardeins would they disceive,

And every daie this wall they would threte,
And wish to God that it were doun ybete,
Thus wold they sain, "Alas, thou wicked wall,
Through thine envie thou us lettest all,
Why nilt thou cleave, or fallen all atwo,
Or at the least, but thou wouldest so,
Yet wouldest thou but ones let us mete,
Or ones that we might kissen swete,
Than were we cured of our cares cold,
But nathelesse, yet be we to thee hold,
In as much as thou suffrest for to gone,
Our words through thy lime and eke thy stone,
Yet ought we with thee ben well apaid."
And whan these idle wordes weren said,
The cold wall they woulden kisse of stone,
And take hir leave, and forth they wolden gone,
And this was gladly in the eventide,
Or wonder erly, least men it espide.
And long time they wrought in this manere,
Till on a day, whan Phebus gan to clere,
Aurora with the stremes of her hete,
Had dried up the dew of herbes wete,
Unto this clift, as it was wont to be,
Come Piramus, and after come Tisbe,
And plighten trouthe fully in hir fay,
That ilke same night to steale away,
And to beguile hir wardeins everychone,
And forth out of the citie for to gone,
And for the fieldes ben so brode and wide,
For to mete in o place at o tide,
They set markes, hir meetings should be
There king Ninus was graven, under a tree,
For old paynims, that idolles heried,
Useden tho in fields to ben buried,
And fast by his grave was a well,
And shortely of this tale for to tell,
This covenaunt was affirmed wonder fast,
And long hem thought that the Sunne last,
That it nere gone under the see adoun.
This Tisbe hath so great affectioun,
And so great liking Piramus to see,
That whan she saw her time might be,
At night she stale away full prively,
With her face iwimpled subtelly,
For all her friends (for to save her trouth)
She hath forsake alas, and that is routh,
That ever woman woulde be so trew,
To trusten man, but she the bet him knew:
And to the tree she goeth a full good pace,
For love made her so hardy in this case,
And by the well adoun she gan her dresse,
Alas, than commeth a wild lionesse
Out of the wood, withouten more arrest,
With bloody mouth, strangling of a beast,
To drinken of the well there as she sat,
And whan that Tisbe had espied that,
She rist her up with a full drery herte,
And in a cave, with dreadfull foot she start,
For by the Moone she saw it well withall.
And as she ran, her wimple let she fall,
And toke none hede, so sore she was awhaped,
And eke so glad that she was escaped,
And that she sat, and lurketh wonder still:
Whan that this lionesse hath dronke her fill,
About the well gan she for to wind,
And right anon the wimple gan she find,
And with her bloody mouth it all to rent,
Whan this was done, no lenger she ne stent,
But to the wood her way than hath she nome.
And, at the last, this Piramus is come,
But all too long, alas, at home was hee,
The Moone shone, men might well ysee,
And in his way, as that he come full fast,
His eyen to the ground adoun he cast,
And in the sonde, as he beheld adoun,
He saw the steppes brode of a lioun,
And in his herte he suddainly agrose,
And pale he wext, therwith his herte arose,
And nere he came, and found the wimple torne,
"Alas," quod he, "the day that I was borne!
This o night woll both us lovers alee;
How should I asken mercy of Tisbee,
Whan I am he that have you slaine? alas!
My bidding hath you slaine in this caas.
Alas, to bidde a woman gone by night
In place thereas perill fallen might,
And I so slow, alas, I ne had be
Here in this place a furlong way ere ye!
Now, what lion that is in this forrest,
My body mote he rente, or what beast
That wild is, gnawen mote he mine herte."
And with that word he to the wimple start,
And kist it oft, and wept on it full sore,
And said, "Wimple, alas, there n'is no more,
But thou shalt feele as well the blood of me,
As thou hast felt the bleeding of Tisbe:"
And with that word he smote him to the herte,
The blood out of the wound as broad start,
As water, whan the conduit broken is.
Now Tisbe, which that wist nat this,
But sitting in her drede, she thought thus,
"If it so fall out that my Piramus
Be comen hither, and may me nat yfind,
He may me holden false, and eke unkind:"
And out she commeth, and after him gan espien,
Both with her herte and with her eien,
And thought, "I woll him tellen of my drede,
Both of the lionesse and of my dede."
And, at the last, her love than hath she found,
Beating with his heeles on the ground,
All bloody, and therewithall abacke she start,
And like the wawes, quappe gan her herte,
And pale as boxe she woxe, and in a throw
Avised her, and gan him well to know,
That it was Piramus her herte dere.
Who could write whiche a deadly chere
Hath Tisbe now, and how her haire she rent,
And how she gan her selfe to turment,
And how she lieth and swouneth on the ground,
And how she wept of teares full his wound,
How medleth she his blood with her complaint,
How with her blood her selven gan she paint,
How clippeth she the red corse, alas!
How doth this wofull Tisbe in this caas!
How kisseth she his frosty mouth so cold!
"Who hath don this? and who hath ben so bold
To sleen my lefe? o speake Piramus,
I am thy Tisbe, that thee calleth thus,"
And therwithall she lifteth up his head.
This wofull man that was nat fully dead,
Whan that he herd the name of Tisbe crien,
On her he cast his heavy deadly eyen,
And doun againe, and yeeldeth up the ghost.
Tisbe rist up, without noise or bost,
And saw her wimple and his empty sheath,
And eke his swerd, that him hath done to death,
Than spake she thus, "My woful hand," quod she,
"Is strong ynough in such a werke to me,
For love shall yeve me strength and hardinesse,
To make my wound large ynough I gesse,

I woll thee followen dead, and I woll be
Felaw, and cause eke of thy death," quod she,
"And though that nothing save the death only,
Might thee fro me depart, trewly
Thou shalt no more departe now fro me
Than fro the death, for I woll go with thee.
"And now ye wretched jelous fathers our,
We that weren whylome children your,
We praien you, withouten more envie,
That in o grave we moten lie,
Sens love hath brought us to this pitous end;
And right wise God, to every lover send,
That loveth trewly, more prosperite
Than ever had Piramus and Tisbe,
And let no gentill woman her assure
To putten her in such an aventure,
But God forbid but that a woman can
Ben as true and loving as a man,
And, for my part, I shall anon it kithe:"
And with that word, his swerde she tooke swithe,
That warme was of her loves blood, and hote,
And to the herte she her selven smote.
And thus are Tisbe and Piramus ago;
Of true men I find but few mo
In all my bookes, save this Piramus,
And therefore have I spoken of him thus;
For it is deintie to us men to find
A man that can in love be true and kind.
Here may ye seene, what lover so he be,
A woman dare and can as well as he.

THE LEGEND OF DIDO,

Queene of Cartage.

Glory and honour, Virgile Mantuan,
Be to thy name, and I shall as I can
Follow thy lanterne, as thou goest beforne,
How Eneas to Dido was forsworne,
In thine Eneide, and Naso woll I take
The tenour and the great effects make.
Whan Troy brought was to destruction
By Grekes sleight, and namely by Sinon,
Faining the horse offred unto Minerve,
Through which that many a Trojan must sterve,
And Hector had after his death apered,
And fire so wood it might nat ben stered,
In all the noble toure of Ilion,
That of the citie was the cheefe dungeon,
And all the country was so low ybrought,
And Priamus the king fordone and nought,
And Eneas was charged by Venus
To flien away, he tooke Ascanius
That was his son, in his right hand and fled,
And on his backe he bare and with him led
His old father, cleped Anchises,
And by the way his wife Creusa he lees,
And mokell sorrow had he in his mind,
Ere that he coulde his fellawship find:
But, at the last, whan he had hem found,
He made hem redy in a certaine stound,
And to the sea full fast he gan him hie,
And saileth forth with all his companie
Towards Itaile, as would destinee:
But of his aventures in the see,
N'is nat to purpose for to speke of here,
For it accordeth nat to my matere,
But, as I said, of him and of Dido
Shall be my tale, till that I have do.
So long he sailed in the salt see,
Till in Libie unneth arrived he,
So was he with the tempest all to shake,
And whan that he the haven had ytake,
He had a knight was called Achatees,
And him of all his fellowship he chees,
To gone with him the country for t'espie,
He tooke with him no more companie,
But forth they gon, and left his ships ride,
His feere and he, withouten any guide.
So long he walketh in this wildernesse,
Till at the last he met an hunteresse,
A bow in hond, and arrowes had she,
Her clothes cutted were unto the knee,
But she was yet the fairest creature
That ever was yformed by nature,
And Eneas and Achates she gret,
And thus she to hem spake, whan she hem met.
"Saw ye," quod she, "as ye han walked wide,
Any of my sustren walke you beside,
With any wild bore or other beast,
That they have hunted into this forrest,
Ytucked up with arrowes in her caas?"
"Nay, sothly, lady," quod this Eneas,
"But by thy beautie, as it thinketh me,
Thou mightest never yearthly woman be,
But Phebus suster art thou, as I gesse,
And if so be that thou be a goddesse,
Have mercy on our labour and our wo."
"I n'am no goddesse soothly," quod she tho,
For maidens walken in this country here,
With arrows and with bow, in this manere:
This is the realme of Libie there ye been,
Of which that Dido lady is and queen,"
And shortly told all the occasion
Why Dido came into that region,
Of which as now me listeth nat to rime,
It nedeth nat, it nere but losse of time,
For this is all and some, it was Venus,
His owne mother, that spake with him thus,
And to Cartage she bade he should him dight,
And vanished anon out of his sight.
I could follow word for word Vergile,
But it would lasten all to longe while.
This noble queen that cleped was Dido,
That whylom was the wife of Sicheo,
That fairer was than the bright Sunne,
This noble toun of Carthage hath begunne,
In which she reigneth in so great honour,
That she was hold of all quenes flour,
Of gentillesse, of freedome, and of beaute,
That well was him that might her ones se,
Of kings and lordes so desired,
That all the world her beautie had yfired,
She stood so well in every wights grace.
Whan Eneas was come unto the place,
Unto the maister temple of all the toun,
There Dido was in her devotioun,
Full prively his way than hath he nome.
Whan he was in the large temple come,
I cannot saine if that it be possible,
But Venus had him maked invisible,
Thus sayth the booke, withouten any lees.
And whan this Eneas and Achates
Hadden in this temple ben over all,
Than found they depainted on a wall,
How Troy and all the land destroyed was,
"Alas, that I was borne!" quod Eneas,

" Through the world our shame is kid so wide,
Now it is painted upon every side :
We that weren in prosperite,
Ben now disclaundred, and in such degre,
No lenger for to liven I ne kepe ;"
And with that word he brast out for to wepe.
So tenderly that routh it was to seene.
This fresh lady, of the citie queen,
Stood in the temple, in her estate roiall,
So richely, and eke so faire withall,
So yong, so lustie, with her eyen glade,
That if that God that Heaven and yearth made,
Would have a love, for beauty and goodnesse,
And womanhede, trouth, and semelinesse,
Whom should he loven but this lady swete ?
There n'is no woman to him halfe so mete :
Fortune, that hath the world in governaunce,
Hath sodainly brought in so new a chaunce,
That never was there yet so fremed a caas,
For all the company of Eneas,
Which that we wend have lorne in the see,
Arrived is nought ferre fro that citee,
For which the greatest of his lords, some,
By aventure ben to the citie come
Unto that same temple for to seke
The queene, and of hir socour her beseke,
Such renome was ther sprung of her goodnes.
And whan they had tolde all hir distresse,
And all hir tempest and all hir hard caas,
Unto the queene appeared Eneas,
And openly beknew that it was he ;
Who had joy than, but his meine,
That hadden found hir lord, hir governour ?
The quene saw they did him such honour,
And had heard of Eneas, ere tho,
And in her herte had routh and wo,
That ever such a noble man as he
Shall ben disherited in such degre,
And saw the man, that he was like a knight,
And suffisaunt of person and of might,
And like to ben a very gentilman,
And well his wordes he besette can,
And had a noble visage for the nones,
And formed well of brawne and of bones,
And after Venus had such fairenesse
That no man might be halfe so faire I gesse,
And well a lord him semed for to be,
And for he was a straunger, somewhat she
Liked him the bet, as God do boote,
To some folke often new thing is soote ;
Anon her herte hath pitee of his wo,
And with pitie love came also,
And thus for pitie and for gentilnesse,
Refreshed must he ben of his distresse.
She said, certes, that she sorry was,
That he hath had such perill and such caas,
And in her friendly speech, in this manere
She to him spake, and sayd as ye may here.
" Be ye nat Venus sonne and Anchises ?
In good faith, all the worship and encrees
That I may goodly done you, ye shall have,
Your shippes and your meine shall I save ;"
And many a gentle word she spake him to,
And commaunded her messengers to go
The same day, withouten any faile,
His shippes for to seeke and hem vitaile ;
Full many a beast she to the ships sent,
And with the wine she gan hem to present,
And to her roiall paleis she her sped,
And Eneas she alway with her led.
What nedeth you the feastes to discrive,
He never better at ease was in his live,
Full was the feast of deinties and richesse,
Of instruments, of song, and of gladnesse,
And many an amorous looking and devise.
This Eneas is come to Paradise
Out of the swolowe of Hell, and thus in joy
Remembreth him of his estate in Troy,
To dauncing chambers full of paraments,
Of rich beds, and of pavements,
This Eneas is ledde after the meat,
And with the queene whan that he had seat,
And spices parted, and the wine agon,
Unto his chamber was he lad anon,
To take his ease, and for to have his rest
With all his folke, to done what so him lest.
Ther nas courser well ybridled none,
Ne stede for the justing well to gone,
Ne large palfrey, easie for the nones,
Ne jewell fret full of rich stones,
Ne sackes full of gold, of large wight,
Ne rubie none that shineth by night,
Ne gentill hautein faukon heronere,
Ne hound for hart, wild bore, or dere,
Ne cup of gold, with floreins new ybette,
That in the lond of Libie may ben gette,
That Dido ne hath Eneas it ysent,
And all is payed what that he hath spent.
Thus can this honorable quene her gestes call,
As she that can in freedome passen all.
Eneas sothly eke, without lees,
Hath sent to his shippe by Achates
After his sonne, and after rich things,
Both scepter, clothes, broches, and eke rings,
Some for to weare, and some to present
To her, that all these noble things him sent,
And bad his sonne how that he should make
The presenting, and to the quene it take.
Repaired is this Achates againe,
And Eneas full blisfull is and faine
To seene his yong sonne Ascanius,
For to him it was reported thus,
That Cupido, that is the god of love,
At prayer of his mother high above,
Had the likenesse of the child ytake,
This noble queene enamoured for to make
On Eneas ; but of that scripture
Be as he may, I make of it no cure ;
But soth is this, the queen hath made such cheer
Unto this child, that wonder was to here,
And of the present that his father sent,
She thanked him oft in good entent.
Thus is this queen in pleasaunce and joy,
With all these new lustie folke of Troy,
And of the deeds hath she more enquired
Of Eneas, and all the story lered
Of Troy, and all the long day they tway
Entendeden for to speake and for to play,
Of which there gan to breden such a fire,
That sely Dido hath now such desire
With Eneas her new guest to deale,
That she lost her hew and eke her heale.
Now to th'effect, now to the fruit of all,
Why I have told this story, and tellen shall.
Thus I begin ; it fell upon a night,
Whan that the Mone upreised had her light,
This noble queene unto her rest went,
She sighed sore, and gon her selfe tourment,
She walketh, waloweth, and made many braide,
As done these lovers, as I have heard saide,

And, at the last, unto her suster Anne
She made her mone, and right thus spake she than.
"Now dere suster mine, what may it be
That me agasteth in my dreme," quod she,
"This ilke new Trojan is so in my thought,
For that me thinketh he is so wel iwrought,
And eke so likely to ben a man,
And therwith so mikell good he can,
That all my love and life lieth in his cure;
Have ye nat heard him tell his aventure?
"Now certes, Anne, if that ye rede me,
I woll faine to him ywedded be,
This is the effect, what should I more seine?
In him lieth all, to do me live or deine."
Her suster Anne, as she that coud her good,
Said as her thought, and somdele it withstood,
But hereof was so long a sermoning,
It were to long to make rehearsing:
But, finally, it may not be withstonde,
Love woll love, for no wight woll it wonde.
The dawning uprist out of the see,
This amorous quene chargeth her meine
The nettes dresse, and speres brode and kene,
In hunting woll this lustie fresh quene,
So pricketh her this new jolly wo,
To horse is all her lustie folke ygo,
Unto the court the houndes ben ybrought,
And up on courser, swift as any thought,
Her yong knights heven all about,
And of her women eke an huge rout.
Upon a thicke palfray, paper white,
With saddle redde, embrouded with delite,
Of gold the barres, up enbossed high,
Sate Dido, all in gold and perrie wrigh,
And she is faire as is the bright morrow,
That healeth sicke folkes of nights sorrow;
Upon a courser, startling as the fire,
Men might tourne him with a little wire.
But Eneas, like Phebus to devise,
So was he fresh arrayed in his wise,
The fomie bridle, with the bitte of gold,
Governeth he right as himselfe hath would;
And forth this noble queene, this lady ride
On hunting, with this Trojan by her side.
The herd of hartes founden is anon,
With "Hey, go bet, pricke thou, let gon, let gon,
Why n'ill the lion comen or the beare,
That I might him ones meten with this spear?"
Thus saine this yong folke, and up they kill
The wild hartes, and have hem at hir will.
Emong all this, to romblen gan the Heven,
The thunder rored with a grisly steven,
Doun come the rain, with haile and sleet so fast,
With Heavens fire, that made so sore agast
This noble queene, and also her meine,
That eche of hem was glad away to flie,
And shortly, fro the tempest her to save,
She fled her selfe into a little cave,
And with her went this Eneas also,
I n'ot with hem if there went any mo,
The authour maketh of it no mention:
And here began the deepe affection
Betwixt hem two, this was the first morrow
Of her gladnesse, and ginning of her sorrow,
For there hath Eneas ykneled so,
And told her all his hurt and all his wo,
And sworne so deepe to her to be true,
For wele or wo, and chaunge for no new,
And as a false lover so well can plaine,
That sely Dido rewed on his paine,
And toke him for husbond, and became his wife
For evermore, while that hem last life;
And after this, whan that the tempest stent,
With mirth out as they came, home they went.
The wicked fame up rose, and that anon,
How Eneas hath with the queene ygon
Into the cave, and demed as hem list:
And whan the king (that Yarbas hight) it wist,
As he that had her loved ever his life,
And woed her to have her to his wife,
Such sorrow as he hath maked, and such chere,
It is a routh and pitie for to here,
But as in love, alday it happeth so,
That one shall laughen at anothers wo,
Now laughed Eneas, and is in joy,
And more richesse than ever was in Troy.
O sely woman, full of innocence,
Full of pitie, of truth, and continence,
What maked you to men to trusten so?
Have ye such routh upon hir fained wo,
And have such old ensamples you beforne?
See ye nat all how they ben forsworne?
Where see ye one, that he ne hath laft his lefe,
Or ben unkind, or done her some mischefe,
Or pilled her or bosted of his dede?
Ye may as well it seene, as ye may rede.
Take hede now of this great gentilman,
This Trojan, that so well her please can,
That faineth him so true and obeysing,
So gentill, and so privie of his doing,
And can so well done all his obeysaunce
To her, at feastes and at daunce,
And whan she goeth to temple, and home agayn,
And fasten till he hath his lady seyn,
And bearen in his devises for her sake,
N'ot I nat what, and songes would he make,
Justen, and done of armes many things,
Send her letters, tokens, brooches, and rings.
Now herkneth how he shal his lady serve:
There as he was in perill for to sterve
For hunger and for mischefe in the see,
And desolate, and fled fro his countree,
And all his folke with tempest all to driven,
She hath her body and eke her realme yeven
Into his hond, there she might have been
Of other land than of Cartage a queen,
And lived in joy inough, what would ye more?
This Eneas, that hath thus deepe yswore,
Is wearie of his craft within a throw,
The hote earnest is all overblow,
And prively he dothe his ships dight,
And shapeth him to steale away by night.
This Dido hath suspection of this,
And thought well that it was al amis,
For in his bed he lieth a night and siketh,
She asketh him anon, what him misliketh,
"My dere herte, which that I love most."
"Certes," quod he, "this night my fathers ghost
Hath in my slepe me so sore tourmented,
And eke Mercury his message hath presented,
That needes to the conquest of Itaile
My destinie is soone for to saile,
For which, me thinketh, brosten is mine herte:"
Therwith his false teares out they start,
And taketh her within his armes two.
"Is that in earnest," quod she, "woll ye so?
Have ye nat sworne to wife me to take?
Alas, what woman woll ye of me make?
I am a gentyl woman, and a queen,
Ye woll not fro your wife thus foule fleen?

That I was borne, alas! what shall I do?"
To tellen in short, this noble queen Dido
She seeketh halowes, and doth sacrifise,
She kneeleth, crieth, that routh is to devise,
Conjureth him, and profereth him to be
His thrall, his servaunt, in the best degre,
She falleth him to foot, and sowneth there,
Dischevile with her bright gilt heere,
And sayth, "Have mercy, let me with you ride,
These lordes, which that wonnen me beside,
Woll me destroyen, only for your sake:
And ye woll me now to wife take,
As ye have sworne, than woll I yeve you leve
To sleen me with your swerd now sone at eve,
For than yet shall I dien as your wife;
I am with child, and yeve my child his life!
Mercy lord, have pitie in your thought!"
But all this thing availeth her right nought!
And as a traitour forthe gan to saile
Toward the large countrey of Itaile,
And thus hath he laft Dido in wo and pine,
And wedded there a ladie hight Lavine.
A cloth he laft, and eke his sword standing,
Whan he fro Dido stale in her sleeping,
Right at her beds head, so gan he hie,
Whan that he stale away to his navie.
Which cloth, whan selie Dido gan awake,
She hath it kist full oft for his sake,
And said, "O sweet cloth, while Jupiter it lest,
Take my soule, unbind me of this unrest,
I have fulfilled of fortune all the course."
And thus, alas, withouten his socourse,
Twentie time yswouned hath she than,
And whan that she unto her suster Anne
Complained had, of which I may not write
So great routh I have it for to endite,
And bad her norice and her sustren gone
To fetchen fire, and other things anone,
And sayd that she would sacrifie,
And whan she might her time well aspie,
Upon the fire of sacrifice she start,
And with his sword she rofe her to the herte:
But as mine authour saith, yet this she seide,
Or she was hurt, beforne or she deide,
She wrote a letter anon, and thus began.
"Right so," quod she, "as the white swan
Ayenst his death beginneth for to sing,
Right so to you I make my complaining,
Not that I trow to getten you againe,
For well I wote it is all in vaine,
Sens that the gods ben contrarious to me,
But sin my name is lost through you," quod she,
"I may well lese a word on you or letter,
Albeit I shall be never the better,
For thilke wind that blew your ship away,
The same wind hath blow away your fay:"
But who so woll all this letter have in mind,
Rede Ovide, and in him he shall it find.

THE LEGEND OF HIPSIPHILE AND MEDEA.

Thou root of false lovers, duke Jason.
Thou sleer, devourer, and confusion
Of gentyl women, gentle creatures,
Thou madest thy reclaiming and thy lures
To ladies of thy scathliche apparaunce,
And of thy wordes farsed with pleasaunce,
And of thy fained trouth, and thy manere,
With thine obeysaunce and humble chere,
And with thine counterfeited paine and wo,
There other falsen one, thou falsed two,
O oft swore thou that thou wouldest die
For love, whan thou ne feltest maladie,
Save foule delite, which thou callest love;
If that I live, thy name shall be shove
In English, that thy deceit shall be know,
Have at thee Jason, now thine honor is blow.
But certes, it is both routh and wo,
That love with false lovers werketh so,
For they shall have well better love and chere
Than he that hath bought love full dere,
Or had in armes many a bloodie boxe,
For ever as tender a capon eateth the foxe,
Though he be fals, and hath the foule betraied,
As shall the good man that therefore paied,
Although he have to the capon skill and right,
The false foxe woll have his part at night.
On Jason this ensample is well yseene,
By Hipsiphile and Medea the queene.
In Thessalie, as Ovide telleth us,
There was a knight, that hight Peleus,
That had a brother, which that hight Eson,
And whan for age he might unnethes gon,
He yave to Peleus the governing
Of al his reign, and made him lord and king,
Of which Eson, this Jason getten was,
That in his time in all that land there nas
Nat such a famous knight of gentillesse,
Of freedome, of strength, and of lustinesse;
After his fathers death he bare him so,
That there nas none that list ben his fo,
But did him all honour and companie,
Of which this Peleus hath great envie,
Imagining that Jason might be
Enhaunsed so, and put in such degre,
With love of lordes of his regioun,
That from his reigne he may be put adoun,
And in his wit a night compassed he
How Jason might best destroyed be,
Withouten slaunder of his compasment;
And, at the last, he tooke avisement,
That to send him into some ferre countre,
There as this Jason may destroyed be;
This was his wit, all made he to Jason
Great chere of looke, and of affection,
For drede least his lords it espide.
So fell it, as fame ronneth wide,
There was such tiding over all, and such loos,
That in an isle, that called was Colcos,
Beyond Troy eastward in the see,
That there was a ram, that men might see,
That had a flees of gold that shone so bright,
That no where was there such another sight;
But it was kept alway with a dragoun,
And many other mervailes up and doun,
And with two bulles maked all of bras,
That spitten fire, and much thing there was,
But this was eke the tale nathelees,
That who so would winnen thilke flees,
He must both, or he it winnen might,
With the buls and the dragon fight.
And king Otes lord was of that isle:
This Peleus bethought upon this wile,
That he his nephew Jason would exhort
To sailen to that lond, him to disport,
And sayd, "Nephew, if it might bee,
That such worship might fall thee,

That thou this famous treasure might win,
And bring it my region within,
It were to me great pleasaunce and honour,
Than were I hold to quite thy labour,
And all thy costes I woll my selfe make,
And chose what folke thou wolt with thee take,
Let see now, darste thou taken this voyage?"
Jason was yonge, and lustie of corage,
And undertooke to done this ilke emprise;
Anon, Argus his ships gan devise.
With Jason went the strong Hercules,
And many another, that he with him ches,
But who so asketh who is with him gon,
Let him rede Argonauticon,
For he woll tell a tale long ynough.
Philoctetes anon the saile up drough,
Whan the wind was good, and gan him hie
Out of his countrey, called Thessalie.
So long they sayled in the salt see,
Till in the isle of Lemnon arrived hee,
All be this nat rehearsed of Guido,
Yet saieth Ovide in his Epistles so,
And of this isle lady was and quene,
The faire yong Hipsiphile the shene,
That whilom Thoas doughter was, the king.
Hipsiphile was gone in her playing,
And, roming on the clevis by the see,
Under a banke, anone, espied she
Where lay the ship that Jason gan arrive:
Of her goodnesse adoune she sendeth blive,
To weten if that any straunge wight
With tempest thider were yblow anight,
To done him succour, as was her usaunce,
To furtheren every wight, and done pleasaunce
Of very bountie and of courtesie.
This messenger adoune him gan to hie,
And found Jason and Hercules also,
That in a cogge to lond were ygo,
Hem to refreshen and to take the aire.
The morning attempre was and faire,
And in hir way this messenger hem mette;
Full cunningly these lordes two he grette,
And did his message, asking hem anon,
If that they were broken, or aught wo begon,
Or had need of lodesmen, or vitaile,
For socoure they shoulde nothing faile,
For it was utterly the queenes will.
Jason answerde meekely and still:
"My lady," quod he, "thanke I hertely
Of her goodnesse; us needeth truly
Nothing as now, but that we weary be,
And come for to play out of the see,
Till that the wind be better in our way."
This lady rometh by the cliffe to play
With her meinie, endlong the strond,
And findeth this Jason and this other stond
In speaking of this thing, as I you told.
This Hercules and Jason gan behold
Howe that the queene it was, and faire her grete,
Anone, right as they with this lady mete,
And she tooke heed, and knew by hir manere,
By hir array, by wordes, and by chere,
That it were gentyl men of great degree,
And to the castle with her leadeth she
These straunge folk, and doth hem great honour,
And asketh hem of travaile and of labour
That they have suffred in the salte see,
So that within a day, two or three,
She knew by the folke that in his shippes be,
That it was Jason, full of renomee,
And Hercules, that had the great loos,
That soughten the aventures of Colcos,
And did hem honour more than before,
And with hem dealed ever longer the more,
For they ben worthy folke, withouten lees,
And namely most she spake with Hercules,
To him her herte bare, he shoulde be
Sadde, wise, and true, of words avisee,
Withouten any other affection
Of love, or any other imagination.
This Hercules hath this Jason praised,
That to the Sunne he hath it up raised,
That halfe so true a man there n'as of love
Under the cope of Heaven that is above,
And he was wise, hardie, secrete, and riche,
Of these three points there nas none him liche,
Of freedome passed he, and lustyhead,
All tho that liven, or ben dead;
Thereto, so great a gentyl man was he,
And of Thessalye likely king to be,
Ther n'as no lacke, but that he was agast
To love, and for to speake shamefast,
Him had lever himselfe to murder and die,
Than that men should a lover him espie,
As would God that I had iyeve
My blood and flesh, so that I might live
With the bones, that he had aught where a wife
For his estate, for such a lustie life
She shoulden lede with this lustie knight.
And all this was compassed on the night
Betwixe him Jason, and this Hercules,
Of these two here was a shreud lees,
To come to house upon an innocent,
For to bedote this queene was hir entent:
And Jason is as coy as is a maid,
He looketh pitously, but naught he sayd,
But freely yave he to her counsailers
Yeftes great, and to her officers,
As woulde God that I leyser had and time,
By processe all his wrong for to rime:
But in this house, if any false lover be,
Right as himselfe now doth, right so did he,
With faining, and with every subtill dede,
Ye get no more of me, but ye woll rede
Th'original, that telleth all the caas,
The sooth is this, that Jason wedded was
Unto this queene, and tooke of her substaunce
What so him list unto his purveyaunce,
And upon her begate children two,
And drough his saile, and saw her never mo:
A letter sent she him certaine,
Which were too long to writen and to saine,
And him reproveth of his great untrouth,
And praieth him on her to have some routh,
And on his children two, she sayd him this,
That they be like of all thing ywis
To Jason, save they couth nat beguile,
And prayd God, or it were long while,
That she that had his herte yreft her fro,
Must finden him untrue also:
And that she must both her children spill,
And all tho that suffreth him his will:
And true to Jason was she all her life,
And ever kept her chast, as for his wife,
Ne never had she joy at her hart,
But died for his love of sorrowes smart.
To Colcos come is this duke Jason,
That is of love devourer and dragon,
As matire appeteth forme alway,
And from forme to forme it passen may,

Or as a well that were bottomles,
Right so can Jason have no pees,
For to desiren through his appetite
To done with gentyl women his delite;
This is his lust, and his felicitie.
Jason is romed forth to the citie,
That whylome cleped was Jasonicos,
That was the master toune of all Colcos,
And hath ytold the cause of his comming
Unto Otes, of that countrey king,
Praying him that he must done his assay
To get the fleese of gold, if that he may;
Of which the king assenteth to his boone,
And doth him honour, as it is doone,
So ferforth that his doughter and his heire,
Medea, which that was so wise and faire,
That fairer saw there never man with eie,
He made her done to Jason companie
At meat, and sitte by him in the hall.
Now was Jason a seemely man withall,
And like a lord, and had a great renoun,
And of his looke as royall as a lioun,
And godly of his speech, and famillere,
And coud of love all the craft and art plenere
Withouten booke, with everiche observaunce,
And as fortune her ought a foule mischaunce,
She woxe enamoured upon this man.
"Jason," quod she, "for ought I see or can,
As of this thing, the which ye ben about,
Ye and your selfe ye put in much dout,
For who so woll this aventure atcheve
He may nat wele asterten, as I leve,
Withouten death, but I his helpe be,
But nathelesse, it is my will," quod she,
"To forthren you, so that ye shall nat die,
But turnen sound home to your Thessalie."
"My right lady," quod this Jason, "tho
That ye have of my death or my wo
Any regard, and done me this honour,
I wot well that my might, ne my labour,
May nat deserve it my lives day,
God thanke you, there I ne can ne may,
Your man am I, and lowly you beseech
To ben my helpe, withouten more speech,
But certes, for my death shall I not spare."
Tho gan this Medea to him declare
The perill of this case, fro point to point
Of his batayle, and in what disjoint
He mote stonde, of which no creature,
Save only she, ne might his life assure:
And shortely, right to the point for to go,
They ben accorded fully betwixe hem two,
That Jason shall her wedde, as trewe knight,
And terme yset to come soone at night
Unto her chambre, and make there his othe
Upon the goddes, that he for lefe or lothe
Ne shulde her never falsen, night ne day,
To ben her husband whyle he live may,
As she that from his deth him saved here,
And here upon at night they mete yfere,
And doth his othe, and gothe with her to bedde,
And on the morow upward he him spedde,
For she hath taught him how he shall nat faile
The flees to winne, and stinten his bataile,
And saved him his life and his honour,
And gate him a name as a conquerour,
Right through the sleight of her enchantment.
Now hath Jason the fleese, and home is went
With Medea, and treasoure fell great wonne,
But unwist of her father she is gonne
To Thessalie, with duke Jason her lefe,
That afterward hath broght her to mischeife,
For as a traytour he is from her go,
And with her left yonge children two,
And falsely hath betraied her, alas!
And ever in love a chefe traytour he was,
And wedded yet the thirde wife anon,
That was the doughter of king Creon.
This is the meede of loving, and guerdon
That Medea received of duke Jason
Right for her trouth, and for her kindnesse,
That loved him better than her selfe I gesse,
And left her father, and her heritage,
And of Jason this is the vassalage,
That in his dayes nas never none yfound
So false a lover going on the ground,
And therfore in her letter thus she said,
First whan she of his falsenesse him upbraid:
"Why liked thee my yellow haire to see,
More than the boundes of mine honestie?
Why liked me thy youth and thy fairenesse,
And of thy tong the infinite graciousnesse?
O haddest thou in thy conquest dead ybe,
Ful mikel untrouth had there died with thee."
Well can Ovide her letter in verse endite,
Which were, as now, too long for to write.

THE LEGEND OF LUCRECE OF ROME.

Now mote I saine th'exiling of kings
Of Rome, for hir horrible doings
Of the last kinge Tarquinius,
As saith Ovid, and Titus Livius,
But for that cause tell I nat this storie,
But for to praysen, and drawen in memorie
The very wife, the very Lucresse,
That for her wifehood, and her stedfastnesse,
Nat only that these paynims her commend,
But that cleped is in our legend
The great Austyn, that hath compassioun
Of this Lucrece, that starfe in Rome toun,
And in what wise I woll but shortly treat,
And of this thing I touch but the great.
When Ardea besieged was about
With Romanes, that full sterne were and stout,
Full long lay the siege, and little wroughten,
So that they were halfe idle, as hem thoughten,
And in his play Tarquinius the yonge,
Gan for to yape, for he was light of tonge,
And said, that "it was an idle life,
No man did there no more than his wife,
And let us speke of wives that is best,
Praise every man his owne as him lest,
And with our speech let us ease our herte."
A knight (that hight Colatin) up stert,
And sayd thus, "Nay, sir, it is no nede
To trowen on the word, but on the dede:
I have a wife," quod he, "that as I trow
Is holden good of all that ever her know;
Go we to Rome to night, and we shull see."
Tarquinius answerde, "That liketh mee."
To Rome they be comen, and fast hem dight
To Colatins house, and downe they light,
Tarquinius, and eke this Colatine;
The husbond knew the efters well and fine,
And full prively into the house they gone,
Nor at the gate porter was there none,

And at the chamber dore they abide:
This noble wife sate by her beds side
Discheveled, for no mallice she ne thought,
And soft woull, sayth Livie, that she wrought,
To kepe her from slouth and idlenesse,
And bad her servaunts done hir businesse,
And asketh hem, "What tidings heren ye?
How sayth men of the siege, how shall it be?
God would the wals were fallen adoun,
Mine husbond is too long out of this toun,
For which drede doth me sore to smert,
Right as a sword it stingeth to mine herte,
Whan I thinke on this or of that place,
God save my lord, I pray him for his grace:"
And therwithall so tenderly she gan weepe,
And of her werke she tooke no more keepe,
But meekely she let her eyen fall,
And thilke semblant sate her well withall,
And eke her teares full of heavinesse,
Embelessed her wifely chastnesse.
Her countenaunce is to her herte digne,
For they acordeden in deed and signe,
And with that word her husbond, Colatin,
Or she of him was ware, came stertling in,
And said, "Drede thee nat, for I am here;"
And she anone up rose, with blisfull chere,
And kissed him, as of wives is the wonne.
Tarquinius, this proud kings sonne,
Conceived hath her beautie and her chere,
Her yellow haire, her bountie, and her manere,
Her hew, her words, that she hath complained,
And by no craft her beautie was nat fained,
And caught to this lady such desire,
That in his herte he brent as any fire,
So woodly that his wit was all forgotten,
For well thought he she should nat be gotten,
And aye the more he was in dispaire,
The more coveiteth, and thought her faire;
His blind lust was all his coveiting.
On morrow, whan the bird began to sing,
Unto the siege he commeth full prively,
And by himselfe he walketh soberly,
The image of her recording alway new,
Thus lay her hair, and thus fresh was her hew,
Thus sate, thus span, this was her chere,
Thus fair she was, and this was her manere:
All this conceit his herte hath new ytake,
And as the see with tempest all to shake,
That after whan the storme is all ago,
Yet woll the water quappe a day or two,
Right so, though that her forme were absent,
The pleasaunce of her forme was present,
But nathelesse, nat pleasaunce, but delite,
Or an unrightfull talent with dispite:
"For, maugre her, she shall my lemman be;
Hap helpeth hardy man alway," quod he,
"What end that I make, it shall be so,"
And girt him with his sword, and gan to go,
And he forthright, till to Rome he come,
And all alone his way that he hath nome
Unto the house of Colatin full right;
Doun was the Sunne, and day hath lost his light,
And in he come unto a privie halke,
And in the night full theefely gan he stalke,
Whan every wight was to his rest brought,
Ne no wight had of treason such a thought,
Whether by window, or by other gin,
With swerd ydraw, shortly he commeth in
There as she lay, this noble wife Lucresse,
And as she woke, her bedde she felt presse.
"What beast is that," quod she, "that wayeth [thus?"
"I am the kings sonne Tarquinius,"
Quod he, "but and thou crie, or any noise make,
Or if thou any creature awake,
By thilke God that formed man of live,
This swerd through thine herte shall I rive;"
And therwithall unto her throte he stert,
And set the swerd all sharpe on her herte:
No word she spake, she hath no might therto,
What shall she saine? her wit is all ago;
Right as whan a wolfe findeth a lamb alone,
To whom shall she complaine or make mone?
What, shall she fight with an hardy knight?
Well wote men a woman hath no might:
What, shall she crie, or how shall she astert,
That hath her by the throte, with swerd at herte?
She asketh grace, and said all that she can.
"No wolt thou nat," quod this cruell man,
"As wisely Jupiter my soule save,
I shall in thy stable slee thy knave,
And lay him in thy bed, and loud crie,
That I thee find in such avoutrie,
And thus thou shalt be dead, and also lese
Thy name, for thou shalt nat chese."
This Romans wives loveden so her name
At thilke time, and dreden so the shame,
That what for fere of slander, and drede of death
She lost both at ones wit and breath,
And in a swough she lay, and woxe so dead,
Men mighten smite off her arme or head,
She feleth nothing, neither foule ne faire.
Tarquinius, that art a kings heire,
And shouldest, as by linage and by right,
Done as a lord and a very knight,
Why hast thou done dispite to chivalrie?
Why hast thou done this lady villanie?
Alas, of thee this was a villanous dede,
But now to the purpose: in the story I rede,
Whan he was gon, and this mischaunce is fall,
This lady sent after her friendes all,
Father, mother, and husbond, all yfere,
And discheveled with her haire clere,
In habite such as women used tho
Unto the burying of hir frends go,
She sate in hall, with a sorowfull sight;
Her friends asken what her aylen might,
And who was dead? and she sate aye weeping,
A word for shame ne may she forth out bring,
Ne upon hem she durst nat behold,
But, at the last, of Tarquiny she hem told
This rufull case, and all this thing horrible,
The wo to tell were impossible
That she and all her friends make at ones;
All had folkes hertes ben of stones,
It might have maked hem upon her rew,
Her herte was so wifely and so trew;
She said, that for her gilt ne for her blame
Her husbond should nat have the foule name,
That would she nat suffren by no way:
And they answerde all unto her fay,
That they foryave it her, for it was right,
It was no gilt, it lay nat in her might,
And saiden her ensamples many one,
But all for naught, for thus she said anone:
"Be as be may," quod she, "of forgiving,
I will nat have no forgift for nothing;"
But prively she cought forth a knife,
And therwithall she raft her selfe her life,
And as she fell adowne she cast her looke,
And of her clothes yet heed she tooke,

For in her falling, yet she had a care
Least that her feet or such things lay bare,
So well she loved cleannesse, and eke trouth;
Of her had all the towne of Rome routh,
And Brutus hath by her chast blood swore
That Tarquin should ybanished be therfore,
And all his kinne; and let the people call,
And openly the tale he told hem all,
And openly let carry her on a bere
Through all the town, that men may see and here
The horrible deed of her oppressioun,
Ne never was there king in Rome toun
Sens thilke day, and she was holden there
A saint, and ever her day yhallowed dere,
As in hir law: and thus endeth Lucresse,
The noble wife, Titus beareth witnesse:
I tell it, for she was of love so trew,
Ne in her will she chaunged for no new,
And in her stable herte, sadde and kind,
That in these women men may all day find
There as they cast hir herte, there it dwelleth,
For well I wote, that Christ himselfe telleth
That in Israel, as wide as is the lond,
That so great faith in all the lond he ne fond
As in a woman, and this is no lie,
And as for men, looke ye, such tyrannie
They doen all day, assay hem who so list,
The truest is full brotell for to trist.

THE LEGEND OF ARIADNE OF ATHENS.

Judge infernall, Minos, of Crete king,
Now commeth thy lot, thou commest on the ring;
Nat for thy sake only written is this storie,
But for to clepe ayen unto memorie,
Of Theseus the great untrouth of love,
For which the gods of Heaven above
Ben wroth, and wrath have take for thy sinne;
Be red for shame! now I thy life beginne.
Minos, that was the mighty king of Crete,
That had an hundred cities strong and grete,
To schoole hath sent his sonne Androgeus
To Athens, of the which it happed thus,
That he was slaine, learning phylosophie,
Right in that citie, nat but for envie.
The great Minos, of the which I speke,
His sonnes death is come for to wreke,
Alcathoe he besieged hard and long,
But nathelesse, the walles be so strong,
And Nisus, that was king of that cite,
So chivalrous, that little dredeth he;
Of Minos or his host tooke he no cure,
Till on a day befell an aventure,
That Nisus doughter stood upon the wall,
And of the siege saw the manner all:
So happed it, that at scarmishing
She cast her herte upon Minos the king,
For his beautie, and his chevalrie,
So sore that she wende for to die.
And shortly of this processe for to pace,
She made Minos winnen thilke place,
So that the citie was all at his will,
To saven whom him list, or els spill;
But wickedly he quit her kindnesse,
And let her drench in sorrow and distresse,
N'ere that the gods had of her pite,
But that tale were too long as now for me.
Athenes wan this king Minos also,
As Alcathoe, and other townes mo,
And this the effect, that Minos hath so driven
Hem of Athenes, that they mote him yeven
Fro yere to yere her owne children dere
For to be slaine, as ye shall after here.
This Minos hath a monster, a wicked best,
That was so cruell, that without areest,
Whan that a man was brought into his presence,
He would him eat, there helpeth no defence:
And every third yeare, withouten dout,
They casten lotte, as it came about,
On rich and poore, he must his sonne take,
And of his childe he must present make
To Minos, to save him or to spill,
Or let his beast devour him at his will.
And this hath Minos done right in dispite,
To wreke his sonne was set all his delite,
And make hem of Athenes his thrall
Fro yere to yere, while he liven shall;
And home he saileth whan this toun is wonne.
This wicked custome is so long yronne,
Till of Athenes king Egeus
Mote senden his owne sonne Theseus,
Sens that the lotte is fallen him upon
To ben devoured, for grace is there non.
And forth is ladde this wofull yonge knight
Unto the country of king Minos full of might,
And in a prison fettred fast is he,
Till the time he should yfreten be.
Well maist thou wepe, O wofull Theseus,
That art a kings sonne, and damned thus,
Me thinketh this, that thou art depe yhold
To whom that saved thee fro cares cold,
And now if any woman helpe thee,
Well oughtest thou her servaunt for to bee,
And ben her true lover, yere by yere,
But now to come ayen to my matere.
The toure, there this Theseus is throw,
Down in the bottome derk, and wonder low,
Was joyning to the wall of a foreine
Longing unto the doughtren tweine
Of Minos, that in hir chambers grete
Dwelten above the maister strete
Of the towne, in joy and in sollas:
Not I n'at how it happed, percaas,
As Theseus complained him by night,
The kings doughter, that Ariadne hight,
And eke her suster Phedra, herden all
His complaint, as they stood on the wall
And looked upon the bright Moone,
Hem list nat to go to bed so soone:
And of his wo they had compassion
A kings sonne to be in such prison,
And ben devoured, thought hem great pite:
Than Ariadne spake to her suster free,
And said: "Phedra, lefe suster dere,
This wofull lords sonne may ye nat here,
How pitously he complaineth his kin,
And eke his poore estate that he is in,
And guiltlesse, certes, now it is routh,
And if ye woll assent, by my trouth,
He shall ben holpen, how so that we do."
Phedra answerde, "Ywis me is as wo
For him as ever I was for any man,
And to his helpe the best rede I can
Is that we done the gailer prively
To come and speke with us hastely,
And done this wofull man with him to come
For if he may this monster overcome,

Than were he quit, there is none other boot,
Let us well taste him at his herte root,
That if so be that he a weapon have,
Where that he his life dare kepe or save,
Fighten with this fiend, and him defend,
For in the prison, here as he shall discend,
Ye wote well, that the beast is in a place
That is not derke, and hath roume and eke space
To welde an axe or swerde, staffe or knife,
So that me thinketh he should save his life,
If that he be a man, he shall do so:
And we shall make him balles eke also
Of wexe and towe, that whan he gapeth fast,
Into the beestes throte he shall hem cast,
To sleke his honger, and encomber his teeth,
And right anon, whan that Theseus seeth
The beest acheked, he shall on him leepe
To sleen him, or they comen more to keepe;
This weapen shal the gailer, or that tide,
Full prively within the prison hide:
And, for the house is crencled to and fro,
And hath so queint waies for to go,
For it is shapen as the mase is wrought,
Thereto have I a remedy in my thought,
That by a clewe of twine, as he hath gon
The same way he may returne anon,
Folowing alway the threde, as he hath come,
And whan this beest is overcome,
Than may he flien away out of this stede,
And eke the gailer may ne with him lede,
And him avaunce at home in his countre,
Sens that so great a lordes sonne is he:
This is my rede, if that ye dare it take."
What shold I lenger sermon of it make?
The gailer cometh, and with him Theseus,
Whan these things ben accorded thus.
Downe sate Theseus upon his knee,
"The right lady of my life," quod he,
"I sorowfull man, ydamned to the deth,
Fro you, whiles that me lasteth breth,
I wol nat twinne, after this aventure,
But in your service thus I woll endure,
That as a wretch unknow I woll you serve
For evermore, till that mine herte sterve,
Forsake I woll at home mine heritage,
And, as I said, ben of your court a page,
If that ye vouchsafe that in this place
Ye graunt me to have soche a grace
That I may have nat but my meate and drinke,
And for my sustinaunce yet woll I swinke,
Right as you list, that Minos, ne no wight,
Sens that he saw me never with eyen sight,
Ne no man else shall me espie,
So slily and so well I shal me grie,
And me so wel disfigure, and so low,
That in this world there shall no man me know,
To have my life, and to have presence
Of you, that done to me this excellence;
And to my father shall I sende here
This worthy man, that is your gaylere,
And him so guerdon that he shall well be
One of the greatest men of my countre,
And if I durst saine, my lady bright,
I am a kings sonne, and eke a knight,
As wold God, if that it might be,
Ye weren in my countrey all thre,
And I with you, to beare you companie,
Than shuld ye sene if that I thereof lie;
And if that I profer you in lowe manere
To ben your page, and serven you right here,
But I you serve as lowly in that place,
I pray to Mars to yeve me suche grace
That shames death on me there mote fall,
And death and poverte to my frends all,
And that my sprite by night mote go,
After my death, and walke to and fro,
That I mote of traitour have a name,
For which my sprit mote go, to do me shame,
And if I clayme ever other degree,
But ye vouchsafe to yeve it mee,
As I have said, of shames death I dey,
And mercy, lady, I can naught else sey."
A semely knight was this Theseus to see,
And yonge, but of twenty yere and three,
But who so had ysene his countenance,
He wold have wept for routh of his penance:
For which this Ariadne in this manere,
Answerde to his profre and to his chere.
"A kings sonne, and eke a knight," quod she,
"To ben my servaunt in so lowe degree,
God shilde it, for the shame of women all,
And lene me never soch a case befall,
And sende you grace, and sleight of herte also,
You to defend, and knightly to sleen your foe,
And lene hereafter I may yer find
To me, and to my suster here, so kind,
That I ne repent nat to yeve you life,
Yet were it better I were your wife,
Sith ye ben as gentill borne as I,
And have a realme nat but fast by,
Than that I suffred your gentillesse to sterve,
Or that I let you as a page serve;
It is no profite, as unto your kinrede,
But what is that, that man woll nat do for dred?
And to my suster, sith that it is so,
That she mote gone with me, if that I go,
Or els suffre death as wel as I,
That ye unto your sonne as trewly,
Done her be wedded, at your home coming,
This is the finall end of all this thing,
Ye swere it here, upon all that may be sworne?"
"Ye, lady mine," quod he, "or els to torne
Mote I be with the Minotaure or to morrow,
And haveth here of mine herte blood to borow,
If that ye woll, if I had knife or speare,
I would it letten out, and thereon sweare,
For than at erste, I wot ye would me leve,
By Mars, that is chiefe of my beleve,
So that I might liven, and nat faile
To morow for to taken my bataile,
I nolde never fro this place flie,
Till that ye should the very profe se,
For now, if that the soth I shall you say,
I have loved you full many a day,
Though ye ne wist nat, in my countre,
And aldermost desired you to see,
Of any earthly living creature,
Upon my truth I sweare and you assure,
This seven yere I have your servaunt be,
Now have I you, and also have ye me,
My dere herte, of Athenes duchesse."
This lady smileth at his stedfastnesse,
And at his hertely wordes, and at his chere,
And to her suster said in this manere:
"And sothly, suster mine," quod she,
"Now be we duchesses, both I and ye,
And sikerde to the regals of Athenes,
And both hereafter likely to be queenes,
And saved fro his death a kings sonne,
As ever of gentill women is the wonne,

To save a gentil man, enforth hir might,
In honest cause, and, namely, in his right,
Me thinketh no wight ought us herof blame,
Ne bearen us therefore an yvel name."
And shortly of this mater for to make,
This Theseus of her hath leave ytake,
And every point was performed in dede,
As ye have in this covenaunt herde me rede,
His wepen, his clewe, his thing that I have said,
Was by the gailer in the house ylaid,
There as the Minotaure hath his dwelling,
Right fast by the dore, at his entring,
And Theseus is lad unto his dethe,
And forth unto this Minotaure he gethe,
And by the teaching of this Adriane,
He overcame this beest, and was his bane,
And out he cometh by the clewe againe
Ful prively, whan he this beest hath slaine,
And the gailer gotten hath a barge,
And of his wives treasure gan it charge,
And toke his wife, and eke her suster free,
And by the gailer, and with hem al three
Is stole away out of the lond by night,
And to the countre of Enupie him dight,
There as he had a frende of his knowing,
There feesten they, there daunsen they and sing,
And in his armes hath this Adriane,
That of the beest hath kept him fro his bane,
And get him there a noble barge anone,
And of his countrey folke a ful great wone,
And taketh his leave, and homeward saileth hee,
And in an yle, amidde the wilde see,
There as there dwelt creature none,
Save wild beestes, and that full many one,
He made his shippe a londe for to sette,
And in that yle halfe a day he lette,
And said, that on the londe he must him rest.
His mariners have done right as him lest,
And for to tell shortly in this caas,
Whan Ariadne his wife a slepe was,
For that her suster fayrer was than she,
He taketh her in his honde, and forth goeth he
To ship, and as a traitour stale away,
While that this Ariadne a slepe lay,
And to his countrey warde he sailed blive,
A twenty divel way the winde him drive,
And found his father drenched in the see.
Me list no more to speke of him, parde,
These false lovers, poison be hir bane.
But I wol turne againe to Adriane,
That is with slepe for werinesse ytake,
Ful sorowfully her herte may awake.
Alas, for thee mine herte hath pite,
Right in the dawning awaketh she,
And gropeth in the bed, and fond right nought:
"Alas," quod she, "that ever I was wrought,
I am betrayed," and her heere to rent,
And to the stronde barefote fast she went,
And cried: "Theseus, mine herte swete,
Where be ye, that I may nat with you mete?"
And might thus with beestes ben yslaine.
The holowe rockes answerde her againe,
No man she saw, and yet shone the moone,
And hie upon a rocke she went soone,
And sawe his barge sayling in the see,
Cold woxe her herte, and right thus said she:
"Meker then ye find I the beestes wilde."
Hath he nat sinne, that he her thus begilde?
She cried, "O turne againe for routhe and sinne,
Thy barge hath nat all his meinie in!"
Her kerchefe on a pole sticked she,
Ascaunce he should it well yse,
And him remembre that she was behind,
And turne againe, and on the stronde her find.
But all for naught, his way he is gone,
And downe she fel a swowne on a stone,
And up she riste, and kissed in all her care
The steppes of his feete, there he hath fare,
And to her bed right thus she speketh tho:
"Thou bed," quod she, "that hast received two,
Thou shalt answere of two, and not of one,
Where is the greater parte away gone?
"Alas, wher shal I wretched wight become?
For though so be that bote none here come,
Home to my countrey dare I nat for drede,
I can my selfe in this case nat rede."
What should I tell more her complaining?
It is so long, it were an heavy thing;
In her epistle, Naso telleth all,
But shortly to the end tell I shall,
The goddes have her holpen for pite,
And in the signe of Taurus men may see
The stones of her crowne shine clere,
I will no more speake of this matere,
But thus this false lover can begile
His trew love, the divel quite him his wile.

THE LEGEND OF PHILOMENE.

Thou yever of the formes, that hast wrought
The fayre world, and bare it in thy thought
Eternally, er thou thy werke began,
Why madest thou unto the slaunder of man,
Or all be that it was not thy doing,
As for that end to make suche a thing,
Why suffredest thou that Tereus was bore,
That is in love so false and so forswore,
That fro this world up to the first Heven,
Corrumpeth, whan that folke his name neven?
And as to me, so grisly was his dede,
That whan that I this foule storie rede
Mine eyen wexen foule, and sore also,
Yet lasteth the venime of so longe ago,
That enfecteth him that wolde behold
The storie of Tereus, of which I told,
Of Trace was he lord, and kin to Marte,
The cruel god that stante with blody darte,
And wedded had he with blisfull chere
King Pandionis faire doughter dere,
That hight Progne, floure of her countre,
Though Juno list not at the feast be,
Ne Hymeneus, that god of wedding is,
But at the feast ready ben, ywis,
The furies three, with all hir mortall bronde,
The oule all night above the balkes wonde,
That prophete is of wo and of mischaunce;
This revell, full of song and full of daunce,
Last a fourtenight, or little lasse;
But shortly of this storie for to passe,
(For I am weary of him for to tell)
Five yere his wife and he togither dwell,
Till on a day she gan so sore long
To seene her suster, that she saw not long,
That for desire she n'ist what to say,
But to her husbond gan she for to pray
For Gods love, that she mote ones gone
Her suster for to seene, and come ayen anone,

Or else, but she mote to her wend,
She praied him that he would after her send:
And this was, day by day, all her prayere,
With al humblesse of wifehood, word and chere.
This Tereus let make his ships yare,
And into Grece himselfe is forth yfare,
Unto his father-in-law gan he pray,
To vouchsafe, that for a moneth or tway,
That Philomene his wives suster might
On Progne his wife but ones have a sight,
"And she shall come to you again, anon,
My selfe with her, I will both come and gon,
And as my hertes life I will her kepe."
This old Pandion, this king gan wepe
For tendernesse of herte, for to leve
His doughter gon, and for to yeve her leve;
Of all this world he loved nothing so,
But, at the last, leave hath she to go,
For Philomene, with salt teares eke,
Gan of her father grace to beseke
To seene her suster, that her longeth so,
And him embraceth with her armes two;
And there also yong and faire was she,
That whan that Tereus saw her beaute,
And of array, that there was none her liche,
And yet of beautie was she to so riche,
He cast his fierie herte upon her so,
That he woll have her, how so that it go,
And with his wiles kneled, and so praied,
Till at the last Pandion thus saied.
"Now sonne," quod he, "that art to me so dere,
I thee betake my yong doughter dere,
That beareth the key of all mine hertes life,
And grete well my doughter and thy wife,
And yeve her leave sometime for to pley,
That she may seen me ones, or I deie"
And sothly he hath made him riche feast,
And to his folke, the most and eke the least,
That with him came: and yave him yefts great,
And him conveieth through the master streat
Of Athenes, and to the sea him brought,
And tourneth home, no malice he ne thought.
The ores pulleth forth the vessell fast,
And into Trace arriveth at the last,
And up in to a forest he her led,
And to a cave prively he him sped,
And in this darke cave, if her lest
Or list nought, he had her for to rest,
Of which her herte agrose, and saied thus:
"Where is my suster, brother Tereus!"
And therewithall she wept tenderly,
And quoke for feare, pale and pitiously,
Right as the lambe, that of the wolfe is bitten,
Or as the culver, that of the egle is smitten,
And is out of his clawes forth escaped,
Yet it is aferde, and awaped,
Lest it be hent eftsones: so sate she,
But utterly it may none other be,
By force hath this traitour done a deede,
That he hath reft her of her maidenhede,
Maugre her head, by strength and by his might.
Lo, here a deede of men, and that aright.
She crieth, "Suster!" with full loude steven,
And, "Father dere! Helpe me God in Heven!"
All helpeth not, and yet this false thefe
Hath done this lady yet a more mischefe,
For feare lest she should his shame crie,
And done him openly a villanie,
And with his sweard her tong of kerfe he,
And in a castell made her for to be,
Full prively in prison evermore,
And kept her to his usage and to his store,
So that she ne might never more astarte.
O sely Philomene, wo is in thine herte,
Huge been thy sorowes, and wonder smart!
God wreke thee, and sende thee thy boone!
Now is time I make an end soone.
This Tereus is to his wife ycome,
And in his armes hath his wife ynome,
And pitiously he wept, and shoke his hedde,
And swore her that he found her suster dedde,
For which this selie Progne hath soch wo,
That nigh her sorowfull herte brake a two.
And thus in teares let I Progne dwell,
And of her suster forth I woll you tell.
This wofull lady ylearned had in youth,
So that she worken and enbrauden couth,
And weaven in stole the radevore,
As it of women hath be woved yore,
And sothly for to saine, she hath her fill
Of meate and drinke, of clothing at her will,
And couthe eke rede well ynough and endite,
But with a penne she could not write,
But letters can she weave to and fro,
So that by the yere was all ago,
She had woven in a flames large,
How she was brought fro Athens in a barge,
And in a cave how that she was brought,
And all the thing that Tereus wrought,
She wave it wel, and wrote the storie above,
How she was served for her susters love.
And to a man a ring she yave anon,
And praied him by signes for to gon
Unto the queene, and bearen her that clothe,
And by signe swore many an othe
She should him yeve what she getten might.
This man, anon, unto the queene him dight,
And toke it her, and all the maner told,
And whan that Progne hath this thing behold,
No worde she spake, for sorow and eke for rage,
But fained her to gon on pilgrimage
To Baccus temple, and in a little stound
Her dombe suster sitting hath she found
Weeping in the castell, her selfe alone;
Alas, the wo, constraint, and the mone
That Progne upon her dombe suster maketh,
In armes everich of hem other taketh,
And thus I let hem in hir sorow dwell;
The remnaunt is no charge to tell,
For this is all and some, thus was she served
That never agilte, ne deserved
Unto this cruell man, that she of wist.
Ye may beware of men, if that you list,
For all be that he woll not for shame
Doen as Tereus, to lese his name,
Ne serve you as a murtherer or a knave,
Full little while shull ye trew him have,
That wol I sain, al were he now my brother,
But it so be that he may have another.

THE LEGENDE OF PHILLIS.

By prove, as well as by auctorite,
That wicked fruite commeth of a wicked tree,
That may ye find, if that it liketh you,
But for this end, I speake this as now,
To tell you of false Demophon:
In love a falser heard I never non.

But it were his father, Theseus,
God for his grace fro soch one kepe us,
Thus these women praien, that it here,
Now to the effect tourne I of my matere.
Destroied is of Troie the citee,
This Demophon came sayling in the see
Toward Athenes, to his paleis large,
With him came many a ship and many a barge
Full of folke, of which full many one
Is wounded sore, and sicke and wo begone,
And they have at the siege long ylaine,
Behind him came a winde, and eke a raine,
That shofe so sore his saile might not stonde,
Him were lever than all the world a londe,
So hunted him the tempest to and fro,
So darke it was he could no where go,
And with a wave brusten was his stere,
His ship was rent so lowe, in such manere,
That carpenter could it not amende,
The see by night as any torche brende
For wood, and posseth him up and doun,
Till Neptune hath of him compassioun,
And Thetis, Chorus, Triton, and they all,
And maden him up a londe to fall,
Wherof that Phillis lady was and queene,
Lycurgus doughter, fairer unto seene
Than is the floure again the bright Sonne.
Unneth is Demophon to londe ywonne,
Weake and eke werie, and his folke forpined
Of werinesse, and also enfamined,
And to the death he was almost ydriven,
His wise folke consaile have him yeven,
To seken helpe and succour of the queene,
And loken what his grace might bene,
And maken in that lande some chevesaunce,
And kepen him fro wo, and fro mischaunce,
For sicke he was, and almost at the death,
Unneth might he speake, or drawe breath,
And lieth in Rhodopeia him for to rest.
Whan he may walk, him thought it was best
Unto the countrey to seeken for succour,
Men knew him wele, and did him honour,
For at Athenes duke and lord was he,
As Theseus his father hath ybe,
That in his time was great of renoun,
No man so great in all his regioun,
And like his father of face and of stature,
And false of love, it came him of nature,
As doth the foxe Renarde, the foxes sonne,
Of kinde he coulde his old father wonne
Without lore, as can a drake swimme,
Whan it is caught and carried to the brimme:
This honorable queen Phillis doth him chere,
Her liketh well his sporte and his manere,
But I am agroted here beforne,
To write of hem that in love been forsworne,
And eke to haste me in my legende,
Which to performe, God me grace sende;
Therfore, I passe shortly in this wise,
Ye have well heard of Theseus the gise,
In the betraiyng of faire Adriane,
That of her pitee kept him fro his bane;
At short wordes, right so Demophon,
The same way, and the same pathe hath gon
That did his false father Theseus,
For unto Phillis hath he sworne thus,
To wedden her, and her his trouth plight,
And piked of her all the good he might,
Whan he was hole and sound, and had his rest,
And doth with Phillis what so that him lest,
As well I could, if that me list so,
Tellen all his doing to and fro.
He sayd to his countrey mote him saile,
For there he would her wedding apparaile,
As fill to her honour, and his also,
And openly he tooke his leave tho,
And to her swore he would not sojourne,
But in a month again he would retourne,
And in that londe let make his ordinaunce,
As very lorde, and tooke the obeisaunce
Well and humbly, and his shippes dight,
And home he goeth the next way he might,
For unto Phillis yet came he nought,
And that hath she so harde and sore ybought,
Alas, as the storie doth us record,
She was her owne death with a corde,
Whan that she saw that Demophon her traied.
But first wrote she to him, and fast him praied
He would come, and deliver her of pain,
As I rehearse shall a worde or twain,
Me liste not vouchsafe on him to swinke,
Dispenden on him a penne full of ynke,
For false in love was he, right as his sire,
The Devill set hir soules both on a fire:
But of the letter of Phillis woll I write,
A worde or twain, although it be but lite.
"Thine hostesse," quod she, "O Demophon,
Thy Phillis, which that is so wo begon,
Of Rhodopeie, upon you mote complain,
Over the terme set betwixt us twain,
That ye ne holden forward, as ye sayd:
Your ancre, which ye in our haven layd,
Hight us, that ye would comen out of doubt,
Or that the Moone ones went about,
But times fower the Moone hath hid her face
Sens thilke day ye went fro this place,
And fower times light the world again,
But for all that, yet shall I sothly sain,
Yet hath the streme of Scython not brought
From Athenes the ship, yet came it nought,
And if that ye the terme reken would,
As I or other true lovers doe should,
I plain not, God wot, before my day."
But al her letter writen I ne may,
By order, for it were to me a charge,
Her letter was right long, and therto large,
But here and there, in rime, I have it layd
There as me thought that she hath wel sayd.
She sayd, "The sailes commeth not again,
Ne to the word there n'is no fey certain,
But I wot why ye come not," quod she,
"For I was of my love to you so fre,
And of the goddes that ye have swore,
That hir vengeaunce fall on you therfore,
Ye be not suffisaunt to beare the pain,
Too moche trusted I, well may I sain,
Upon your linage, and your faire tong,
And on your teares falsely out wrong,
How coud ye wepe so by craft?" quod she,
"May there suche teares fained be!
"Now, certes, if ye would have in memory,
It ought be to you but little glory,
To have a sely maide thus betrayed,
To God," quod she, "pray I, and oft have prayed,
That it be now the greatest price of all,
And most honour that ever you shall befall,
And whan thine old aunceters painted bee,
In which men may hir worthinesse see,
Than pray I God, thou painted be also,
That folke may reden, forth by as they go,

"'Lo, this is he, that with his flattery
Betraied hath, and done her villany,
That was his true love, in thought and drede.'
"But sothly, of o point yet may they rede,
That ye been like your father, as in this,
For he begiled Ariadne, ywis,
With such an arte, and such subtelte,
As thou thy selven hast begiled me:
As in that poinct, although it be not feire,
Thou folowest certain, and art his heire.
But sens thus sinfully ye me begile,
My body mote ye sene, within a while,
Right in the haven of Athenes fleeting,
Withouten sepulture and burying,
Though ye been harder than is any stone."
And whan this letter was forth sent, anone,
And knew how brotell and how fals he was,
She for dispaire fordid her selfe, alas!
Such sorow hath she, for he beset her so.
Beware ye women of your subtill fo,
Sens yet this day men may ensample se,
And trusteth now in love no man but me.

THE LEGENDE OF HYPERMESTRE.

In Grece, whilom, were brethren two
Of which that one was called Danao,
That many a son hath of his body wonne,
As such false lovers ofte conne.
Emong his sonnes all there was one,
That aldermost he loved of everychone,
And whan this child was borne, this Danao
Shope him a name, and called him Lino,
That other brother called was Egiste,
That was of love as false as ever him liste,
And many a daughter gate he in his life,
Of which he gate upon his right wife,
A doughter dere, and did her for to call,
Hypermestra, yongest of hem all,
The which child of her nativite,
To all good thewes borne was she,
As liked to the goddes or she was borne,
That of the shefe she should be the corne.
The werdes that we clepen destine,
Hath shapen her, that she must needes be
Pitous, sad, wise, true as stele,
And to this woman it accordeth wele,
For though that Venus yave her great beaute,
With Jupiter compowned so was she,
That conscience, trouth, and drede of shame,
And of her wifehode for to kepe her name,
This thought her was felicite as here,
And reed Mars, was that time of the yere
So feble, that his malice is him raft,
Repressed hath Venus his cruell craft,
And what with Venus, and other oppression
Of houses, Mars his venime is adon,
That Hypermestre dare not handle a knife,
In malice, though she should lese her life;
But nathelesse, as Heaven gan tho turne,
Two bad aspectes hath she of Saturne,
That made her to die in prison,
And I shall after make mencion,
Of Danao and Egistes also,
And though so be that they were brethren two,
For thilke tyme n'as spared no linage,
It liked hem to maken mariage
Betwixt Hypermestre, and him Lino,
And casten soch a day it shall be so,
And full accorded was it utterly,
The aray is wrought, the time is fast by,
And thus Lino hath of his fathers brother,
The doughter wedded, and ech of hem hath other;
The torches brennen, and the lamps bright,
The sacrifice been full ready dight,
Th'ensence out of the fire reketh soote,
The floure, the leefe, is rent up by the roote,
To maken garlandes and crounes hie,
Full is the place of sound of minstralcie,
Of songes amourous of mariage,
As thilke tyme was the plain usage,
And this was in the paleis of Egiste,
That in his hous was lord, right as him liste:
And thus that day they driven to an end,
The frendes taken leve, and home they wend,
The night is come, the bride shall go to bed,
Egiste to his chamber fast him sped,
And prively let his doughter call,
Whan that the house voided was of hem all,
He looked on his doughter with glad chere,
And to her spake, as ye shall after here.
"My right doughter, tresour of mine herte,
Sens first that day that shapen was my shert,
Or by the fatall suster had my dome,
So nie mine herte never thing ne come,
As thou, Hypermestre, doughter dere,
Take hede what thy father sayth thee here,
And werke after thy wiser ever mo,
For alderfirst doughter I love thee so,
That all the world to me n'is halfe so lefe,
Ne n'olde rede thee to thy mischefe,
For all the good under the cold Mone,
And what I meane, it shall be said right sone,
With protestacion as sain these wise,
That but thou doe as I shall thee devise,
Thou shalt be ded, by him that all hath wrought,
At short wordes, thou ne scapest nought
Out of my paleis, or that thou be deed,
But thou consent, and werke after my reed,
Take this to the fearfull conclusioun."
This Hypermestre cast her eyen doun,
And quoke as doth the leefe of ashe grene,
Deed wext her hew, and like ashen to sene,
And sayd: "Lord and father, all your will,
After my might, God wote, I will fulfill,
So it be to me no confusion."
"I n'ill," quod he, "have none excepcion,"
And out he caught a knife, as rasour kene,
"Hide this," quod he, "that it be not ysene,
And whan thine husbond is to bed go,
While that he slepeth, cut his throte atwo,
For in my dreme it is warned me,
How that my nevewe shall my bane be,
But which I n'ot, wherfore I woll be siker,
If thou say nay, we two shall have a biker,
As I have said, by him that I have sworn."
This Hipermestre hath nigh her wit forlorn,
And for to passen harmelesse out of that place,
She graunted him, there was none other grace:
And withall a costrell taketh he tho,
And sayd, "Hereof a draught or two,
Yeve him drinke, whan he goeth to rest,
And he shal slepe as long as ever thee lest,
The narcotikes and apies been so strong,
And go thy way, lest that him thinke to long."
Out cometh the bride, and with full sobre chere,
As is of maidens oft the manere,

To chamber brought with revel and with song,
And shortly, leste this tale be to long,
This Lino and she beth brought to bed,
And every wight out at the doore him sped,
The night is wasted, and he fell aslepe,
Full tenderly beginneth she to weepe,
She rist her up, and dredfully she quaketh,
As doth the braunch that Zephirus shaketh,
And husht were all in Argone that citee,
As cold as any frost now wexeth shee,
For pite by the herte strained her so,
And drede of death doth her so moche wo,
That thrise doune she fill, in suche a were,
She riste her up, and stakereth here and there,
And on her handes fast looketh she,
"Alas, shall mine hands bloudie be?
I am a maide, and as by my nature,
And by my semblaunt, and by my vesture,
Mine hands been not shapen for a knife,
As for to reve no man fro his life.
What devill have I with the knife to do?
And shall I have my throte corve a two?
Than shall I blede, alas, and be shende,
And nedes this thing mote have an ende,
Or he or I mote nedes lese our life,
Now certes," quod she, "sens I am his wife,
And hath my faith, yet is bette for me
For to be dedde in wifely honeste,
Than be a traitour living in my shame,
Be as be may, for earnest or for game,
He shall awake, and rise and go his way
Out at this gutter er that it be day:"
And wept full tenderly upon his face,
And in her armes gan him to embrace,
And him she joggeth, and awaketh soft,
And at the window lepe he fro the loft,
Whan she hath warned him, and done him bote.
This Lino swift was and light of foote,
And from her ran a full good paas.
This sely woman is so weake, alas,
And helplesse, so that er she ferre went,
Her cruell father did her for to hent.
Alas, Lino! why art thou so unkind?
Why ne hast thou remembred in thy mind,
And taken her, and led her forth with thee?
For whan she saw that gone away was hee,
And that she might not so fast go,
Ne folowen him, she sate doune right tho,
Untill she was caught, and fettred in prison:
This tale is sayd for this conclusion.

HERE ENDETH THE LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN.

THE COMPLAINT OF MARS AND VENUS.

v. 1—56

GLADETH ye lovers in the morowe graie,
Lo, Venus risen among yon rowes rede,
And floures freshe honour ye this daie,
For whan the Sun uprist than wold they spredo,
But ye lovers that lie in any drede,
Flieth, least wicked tongues you aspie,
Lo, yonde the Sun, the candell of jelousie.

With tears blew, and with a wounded herte
Taketh your leve, and, with saint John to borow,
Apeseth somewhat of your paines smert,
Time cometh eft, that cessen shall your sorrow,
The glad night is worth an heavy morow,
Saint Valentine, a foule thus heard I sing,
Upon thy day, or Sunne gan up spring.

Yet sang this foule, "I rede you all awake,
And ye that have not chosen, in humble wise,
Without repenting, cheseth your make,
Yet at the least, renoveleth your service:
And ye that have full chosen, as I devise,
Confermeth it perpetually to dure,
And paciently taketh your aventure."

And for the worship of this high feast,
Yet woll I in my birdes wise sing,
The sentence of the complaint at the least,
That wofull Mars made at the departing
Fro fresh Venus in a morowning,
Whan Phebus with his firie torches rede,
Ransaked hath every lover in his drede.

Whilome, the three Heavens lorde above,
As well by heavenlich revolucion,
As by Jesert, hath wonne Venus his love,
And she hath take him in subjection,
And as a maistresse taught him his lesson,
Commaunding him never in her service,
He were so bold no lover to dispise.

For she forbade him jealousie at all,
And cruelty, and boste, and tyranny,
She made him at her lust so humble and tall,
That when she dained to cast on him her eye,
He tooke in patience to live or die,
And thus she bridleth him in her maner,
With nothing but with scorning of her chere.

Who reigneth now in blisse but Venus,
That hath this worthy knight in governance?
Who singeth now but Mars, that serveth thus
The faire Venus, causer of pleasaunce?
He bint him to perpetuel obeysaunce,
And she binte her to love him for ever,
But so be that his trespace it discover.

Thus be they knit, and reignen as in Heven,
By loking most, as it fell on a tide,
That by hir both assent was set a steven
That Mars shall enter, as fast as he may glide,
In to her next palais to abide,
Walking his course till she had him ytake,
And he prayed her to hast her for his sake.

Than said he thus, "Mine hertes lady sweete,
Ye know well my mischief in that place,
For sikerly, till that I with you meete,
My life stant there in aventure and grace,
But whan I see the beaute of your face,
There is no drede of death may do me smert,
For all your luste is ease to mine herte."

She hath so great compassion of her knight,
That dwelleth in solitude till she come,
For it stode so, that ilke time, no wight
Counsailed him, ne said to him welcome,
That nigh her wit for sorow was overcome,
Wherefore, she spedded as fast in her way,
Almost in one day as he did in tway.

The great joy that was betwix hem two,
Whan they be mette, there may no tong tel,
There is no more but unto bedde they go,
And thus in joy and blisse I let hem dwell,
This worthy Mars, that is of knighthood well,
The floure of fairnesse happeth in his arms,
And Venus kisseth Mars, the god of arms.

Sojourned hath this Mars, of which I rede,
In chambre amidde the palais prively,
A certaine time, till him fell a drede
Through Phebus, that was commen hastely,
Within the palais yates sturdely,
With torch in hond, of which the stremes bright
On Venus chambre knockeden ful light.

The chambre there as lay this fresh queene,
Depainted was with white boles grete,
And by the light she knew that shon so shene,
That Phebus cam to bren hem with his hete;
This sely Venus, ny dreint in teares wete,
Enbraseth Mars, and said, "Alas, I die,
The torch is come that al this world wol wrie."

Up sterte Mars, him list not to sleepe,
Whan he his lady herde so complaine,
But for his nature was not for to weepe,
Instede of teares, from his eyen twaine
The firy sparcles sprongen out for paine,
And hente his hauberke that lay him beside,
Flie wold he nought, ne might himself hide.

He throweth on his helme of huge weight,
And girt him with his swerde, and in his honde
His mighty speare, as he was wont to feight,
He shaketh so, that it almost to wonde,
Full hevy was he to walken over londe,
He may not hold with Venus company,
But bad her flie least Phebus her espy.

O woful Mars, alas! what maist thou sain,
That in the palais of thy disturbaunce
Art left behind in peril to be slain?
And yet there to is double thy penaunce,
For she that hath thine herte in governance,
Is passed halfe the stremes of thine eyen,
That thou nere swift, wel maist thou wepe and crien.

Now flieth Venus in to Ciclinius tour,
With void corse, for fear of Phebus light,
Alas, and there hath she no socour,
For she ne found ne sey no maner wight,
And eke as there she had but littel might,
Wherefore her selven for to hide and save,
Within the gate she flodde in to a cave.

Darke was this cave, and smoking as the hell,
Nat but two paas within the yate it stood;
A naturel day in darke I let her dwell;
Now wol I speake of Mars, furious and wood,
For sorow he wold have scene his herte blood,
Sith that he might have done her no company,
He ne rought not a mite for to die.

So feble he wext for hete, and for his wo,
That nigh he swelt, he might unneth endure,
He passeth but a sterre in daies two,
But nevertheles, for al his hevy armure,
He foloweth her that is his lives cure,
For whose departing he tooke greater ire,
Than for his brenning in the fire.

After he walketh softly a paas,
Complaining that it pitie was to here,
He saide, "O lady bright, Venus, alas,
That ever so wide a compas is my sphere,
Alas, whan shall I mete you herte dere?
This twelve dayes of April I endure,
Through jelous Phebus this misaventure."

Now God helpe sely Venus alone,
But, as God wold, it happed for to be,
That while the weping Venus made her mone,
Ciclinius, riding in his chivachee,
Fro Venus Valanus might this palais see,
And Venus he salveth, and maketh chere,
And her receiveth as his frende full dere.

Mars dwelleth forth in his adversite,
Complaining ever in her departing,
And what his complaint was remembreth me,
And therefore in this lusty morowning,
As I best can, I woll it saine and sing,
And after that I woll my leave take,
And God yeve every wight joy of his make.

The Complaint of Mars.

The order of complaint requireth skilfully,
That if a wight shal plaine pitously,
There mote be cause wherfore that he him plain,
Or men may deme he plaineth folily,
And causeles: alas, that do not I.
Wherfore the ground and cause of al my pain,
So as my troubled witte may it attain,
I wol reherse, not for to have redresse,
But to declare my ground of hevinesse.

The first time, alas, that I was wrought,
And for certain effects hider brought,
By him that lorded each intelligence,
I yave my trew service and my thought,
For evermo, how dere I have it bought,
To her that is of so great excellence,
That what wight that sheweth first her offence,
Whan she is wroth and taketh of him no cure,
He may not long in joy of love endure.

This is no fained mater that I tell,
My lady is the very sours and well
Of beaute, luste, fredome, and gentilnesse,
Of rich array, how dere men it sell,
Of all disport in which men frendly dwell,
Of love and play, and of benigne humblesse,
Of sowne of instruments of al sweetnesse,
And thereto so well fortuned and thewed,
That through the world her goodnes is shewed.

What wonder is than though that I be set
My service on soch one that may me knet
To wele or wo, sith it lithe in her might,
Therfore mine herte for ever I to her hette,
Ne trewly, for my death shall I not lette
To ben her trewest servaunt, and her knight,
I flatter not, that may wete every wight,
For this day in her service shall I dye,
But grace be, I see her never with eye.

To whom shall I plaine of my distresse,
Who may me help, who may my heart redresse?
Shall I complaine unto my lady free?
Nay, certes, for she hath such heavinesse,
For feare and eke for wo, that, as I gesse,
In littel time it would her bane bee,
But were she safe, it were no force of mee,
Alas, that ever lovers mote endure
For love, so many perilous aventure.

For though so be that lovers be as trewe,
As any metal that is forged newe,
In many a case him tideth oft sorowe;
Somtime hir ladies woll nat on hem rewe;
Somtime, if that jelousie it knewe,
They might lightly lay hir heed to borowe;
Somtime envious folke with tonges horowe,
Depraven hem; alas! whom may they please?
But he be false, no lover hath his ease.

But what availeth such a long sermoun
Of aventures of love up and doun?
I wol retourne and speaken of my paine;
The point is this, of my distruction,
My right lady, my salvacioun,
Is in affray, and not to whom to plaine;
O herte swete, O lady soveraine,
For your disease I ought wel swoun and swelt,
Though I none other harme ne drede felt.

To what fine made the God that sit so hie,
Beneth him love [or] other companie,
And straineth folke to love mauger hir heed?
And than hir joy, for aught I can espie,
Ne lasteth not the twinckling of an eye,
And some have never joy till they be deed:
What meaneth this? what is this mistiheed?
Wherto constraineth he his folke so fast,
Thing to desire, but it should last?

And though he made a lover love a thing,
And maketh it seem stedfast and during,
Yet putteth he in it soch misaventure,
That rest n'is there in his yeving.
And that is wonder, that so just a king
Doth such hardnesse to his creature;
Thus, whether love break or els dure,
Algates he that hath with love to doon,
Hath ofter wo than chaunged is the Moon.

It seemeth he hath to lovers enmite,
And, like a fisher, as men may all day se,
Baited his angle hoke with some pleasance,
Til many a fish is wood, till that he be
Ceased therwith, and than at erst hath he
All his desire, and therwith all mischaunce,
And though the line breke he hath penaunce,
For with that hoke he wounded is so sore,
That he his wages hath for evermore.

The broche of Thebes was of soch kinde,
So full of rubies and of stones of Inde,
That every wight that set on it an eye,
He wende, anone, to worth out of his mind,
So sore the beaute wold his herte bind,
Till he it had, him thought he must die,
And whan that it was his, than should he drie
Soch wo for drede, aye while that he it had,
That welnigh for the feare he should [be] mad.

And whan it was fro his possession,
Than had he double wo and passion,
That he so faire a jewell hath forgo,
But yet this broche, as in conclusion,
Was not the cause of his confusion,
But he that wrought it enfortuned it so,
That every wight that had it shold have wo,
And therfore in the worcher was the vice,
And in the coveitour that was so nice.

So fareth it by lovers, and by me,
For though my lady have so great beaute,
That I was mad till I had gette her grace,
She was not cause of mine adversite,
But he that wrought her, as mote I the,
That put soch a beaute in her face,
That made me coveiten and purchase
Mine owne death, him wite I, that I die,
And mine unwit that ever I clambe so hie.

But to you, hardy knightes of renoune,
Sith that ye be of my devisioune,
Albe I not worthy to so great a name,
Yet saine these clerkes I am your patroune,
Therfore ye ought have some compassion
Of my disease, and take it nat a game,
The proudest of you may be made ful tame,
Wherfore I pray you, of your gentilesse,
That ye complaine for mine heavinesse.

And ye, my ladies, that be true and stable,
By way of kind ye ought to ben able
To have pite of folke that been in paine,
Now have ye cause to cloth you in sable,
Sith that your empresse, the honorable,
Is desolate, wel ought you to plaine,
Now should your holy teares fall and raine;
Alas, your honour and your emprise,
Nigh dead for drede, ne can her not chevise.

Complaineth eke ye lovers, all in fere,
For her that with unfained humble chere,
Was ever redy to do you socour,
Complaineth her that ever hath be you dere,
Complaineth beaute, freedome, and manere,
Complaineth her that endeth your labour,
Complaineth thilke ensample of al honour,
That never did but gentilnesse,
Kitheth therfore in her some kindnesse.

The Complaint of Venus.

There n'is so high comfort to my pleasance,
Whan that I am in any heavinesse,
As to have leiser of remembraunce,
Upon the manhood and the worthinesse,
Upon the trouth, and on the stedfastnesse,
Of him whose I am all, while I may dure,
There ought to blame me no creature,
For every wight praiseth his gentillesse.

In him is bounte, wisdome, and governaunce,
Wel more than any mans witte can gesse,
For grace hath wolde so ferforth him avance,
That of knighthood he his parfite richesse,
Honour honoureth him for his noblesse,
Thereto so well hath fourmed him nature,
That I am his for ever I him ensure,
For every wight praiseth his gentillesse.

And nat withstanding all his suffisaunce,
His gentil herte is of so great humblesse
To me in word, in werke, and in countenance,
And me to serve is all his besinesse,
That I am sette in very sikernesse;
Thus ought I blisse well mine aventour,
Sith that him list me serven and honour,
For every wight praiseth his gentillesse.

Now certes, Love, it is right covenable
That men ful dere abie thy noble things,
As wake a bedde, and fasten at the table,
Weping to laugh, and sing in complainings,
And downe to cast visage and lookings,
Often to chaunge visage and countenaunce,
Play in sleeping, and dremen at the daunce,
All the revers of any glad feeling.

Jelousie he hanged by a cable,
She wold al know through her espying,
There doth no wight nothing so reasonable,
That al n'is harme in her imagining,
Thus dere about is Love in yeving,
Which oft he yeveth without ordinaunce,
As sorow ynough, and little of pleasaunce,
All the revers of any glad feling.

A little time his yeft is agreable,
But full accombrous is the using,
For subtel Jelousie, the deceivable,
Full often time causeth distourbing,
Thus ben we ever in drede and suffring,
In no certaine, we languishen in penaunce,
And have well oft many an hard mischance,
All the revers of any glad feling.

But certes, Love, I say not in soch wise,
That for to scape out of your lace I ment,
For I so long have been in your service,
That for to lete, of will, I never assent,
No force, though Jelousie me tourment,
Suffiseth me to see him whan I may,
And therefore, certes, to my ending day,
To love him best shall me never repent.

And certes, Love, whan I me well advise,
Of any estate that man may represent,
Than have ye made me, through your franchise,
Thefe the best that ever in earth went;
Now love well herte, and look thou never stent,
And let the jealous put it in assay,
That for no paine woll I not say nay,
To love him best shall I never repent.

Harte, to thee it ought ynough suffice,
That Love so high a grace to you sent,
To chose the worthies in all wise,
And most agreable unto mine entent,
Seek no ferther, neither way ne went,
Sith ye have suffisaunce unto my pay;
Thus wol I end this complaining or this lay,
To love him best shall I never repent.

LENVOY.

Princes, receiveth this complaining in gree,
Unto your excellent benignite,
Direct after my litel suffisaunce,
For elde, that in my spirite dulleth mee,
Hath of enditing all the subtelte
Welnigh berafte out of my remembraunce:
And eke to me it is a great penaunce,
Sith rime in English hath soch scarcite,
To folow, word by word, the curiosite
Of Graunson, flour of hem that make in Fraunce.

EXPLICIT

OF THE CUCKOW AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

Chaucer dreameth that hee heareth the cuckow and the nightingale contend for excellencie in singing.

v. 1—20

The god of love, and benedicite,
How mighty and how great a lord is he!
For he can make of low hertes hie,
And of high low, and like for to die,
And hard hertes he can maken free.

He can make within a little stound,
Of sicke folke hole, fresh, and sound,
And of hole he can make seke,
He can bind and unbinden eke,
That he woll have bounden or unbound.

To tell his might my wit may not suffice,
For he can make of wise folke full nice,
For he may do all that he woll devise,
And lither folke to destroyen vice,
And proud hertes he can make agrise.

Shortly, ail that ever he woll he may,
Against him dare no wight say nay,
For he can glad and greve whom him liketh,
And who that he woll he lougheth or siketh,
And most his might he shedeth ever in May

For every true gentle herte free,
That with him is or thinketh for to be,
Againe May now shall have some stering
Or to joy or els to some mourning,
In no season so much, as thinketh me.

For whan they may here the birds sing,
And see the floures and the leaves spring,
That bringeth into hir remembraunce
A manner ease, medled with grevaunce,
And lustie thoughts full of great longing.

And of that longing commeth hevinesse,
And thereof groweth of great sicknesse,
And for lacke of that that they desire,
And thus in May ben hertes set on fire,
So that they brennen forth in great distresse.

I speake this of feeling truly
If I be old and unlusty,
Yet I have felt of the sicknesse through May,
Both hote and cold, and accesse every day,
How sore ywis there wote no wight but I.

I am so shaken with the fevers white,
Of all this May sleepe I but a lite,
And also it is not like to me
That any herte should sleepy be
In whom that Love his firy dart woll smite.

But as I lay this other night waking,
I thought how lovers had a tokening,
And among hem it was a commune tale
That it were good to here the nightingale
Rather than the leud cuckow sing.

And than I thought, anon, as it was day,
I would go some where to assay
If that I might a nightingale here,
For yet had I none heard of all that yere,
And it was tho the third night of May.

And anone, as I the day aspide,
No lenger would I in my bed abide,
But unto a wood that was fast by,
I went forth alone boldely,
And held the way downe by a brooke side,

Till I came to a laund of white and green,
So faire one had I never in been,
The ground was green, ypoudred with daisie,
The floures and the greves like hie,
All greene and white, was nothing els seene.

There sate I downe among the faire flours,
And saw the birds trip out of hir bours,
There as they rested hem all the night,
They were so joyfull of the dayes light,
They began of May for to done honours.

They coud that service all by rote,
There was many a lovely note,
Some song loud, as they had plained,
And some in other manner voice yfained,
And some all out with the full throte.

They proyned hem and made hem right gay,
And daunceden and lepten on the spray,
And evermore two and two in fere,
Right so as they had chosen hem to yere
In Feverere upon saint Valentines day.

And the river that I sate upon,
It made such a noise as it ron,
Accordaunt with the birdes armony,
Me thought it was the best melody
That might ben yheard of any mon.

And for delite, I wote never how,
I fell in such a slomber and a swow,
Nat all asleepe, ne fully waking,
And in that swow, me thought, I hearde sing
The sorry bird, the leud cuckow.

And that was on a tree right fast by,
But who was than evill apaid but I?
"Now God," quod I, "that died on the crois,
Yeve sorrow on thee, and on thy leud vois,
Full little joy have I now of thy cry."

And as I with the cuckow thus gan chide,
I heard in the next bush beside
A nightingale so lustely sing
That with her clere voice she made ring
Through all the greene wood wide.

"Ah, good nightingale," quod I then,
"A little hast thou ben too long hen,
For here hath ben the leud cuckow,
And songen songs rather than hast thou,
I pray to God evill fire her bren."

But now I woll you tell a wonder thing,
As long as I lay in that swouning,
Me thought I wist what the birds ment,
And what they said, and what was hir entent,
And of hir speech I had good knowing.

There heard I the nightingale say,
"Now good cuckow, go somewhere away,
And let us that can singen dwellen here,
For every wight escheweth thee to here,
Thy songs be so elenge, in good fay."

"What," quod she, "what may thee aylen now!
It thinketh me, I sing as well as thou,
For my song is both true and plaine,
And though I cannot crakell so in vaine,
As thou dost in thy throte, I wot never how.

"And every wight may understande mee,
But, nightingale, so may they not done thee,
For thou hast many a nice queint cry,
I have thee heard saine, ocy, ocy,
How might I know what that should be?"

"Ah foole," quod she, "wost thou not what it is,
Whan that I say, ocy, ocy! ywis,
Than meane I that I would wonder faine,
That all they were shamefully yslaine,
That meanen ought againe love amis.

"And also I would that all tho were dede
That thinke not in love hir life to lede,
For who so that wol not the god of love serve,
I dare well say he is worthy to sterve,
And for that skill, ocy, ocy, I grede."

"Eye," quod the cuckow, "this is a queint law,
That every wight shall love or be to draw,
But I forsake all such companie,
For mine entent is not for to die,
Ne never while I live on Loves yoke to draw;

" For lovers ben the folke that ben on live
That most disease have, and most unthrive,
And most endure sorrow, wo, and care,
And least feelen of welfare,
What needeth it ayenst trouth to strive ?"

" What!" quod she, " thou art out of thy mind ;
How might thou in thy churlenesse find
To speake of Loves servaunts in this wise,
For in this world is none so good servise
To every wight that gentle is of kind.

" For thereof truly commeth all goodnesse,
All honour and all gentlenesse,
Worship, ease, and all hertes lust,
Parfite joy, and full assured trust,
Jolitie, pleasaunce, and freshnesse,

" Lowlyhead, largesse, and curtesie,
Semelyhead, and true companie,
Drede of shame for to done amis :
For he that truly Loves servaunt is,
Were lother be shamed than to die.

" And that this is soth that I sey,
In that beleeve I will live and dey,
And cuckow, so I rede that thou do ywis :"
" Than," quod he, "let me never have blisse,
If ever I unto that counsaile obey.

" Nightingale, thou speakest wonder faire,
But for all that is the sooth contraire,
For love is in yong folke but rage,
And in old folke a great dotage,
Who most it useth, most shall enpaire.

" For thereof cometh disease and hevinesse,
So sorow and care, and many a great sicknesse,
Despite, debate, anger, and envie,
Depraving, shame, untrust, and jelousie,
Pride, mischeefe, poverty, and woodnesse :

" Loving is an office of despaire,
And one thing is therein that is not faire,
For who that getteth of love a little blisse,
But if he be alway therewith, ywis,
He may full soone of age have his haire.

" And nightingale, therefore hold thee nie,
For leve me well, for all thy queint crie,
If thou be ferre or long fro thy make,
Thou shalt be as other that been forsake,
And than thou shalt hoten as doe I."

" Fie," quod she, " on thy name, and on thee !
The god of love ne let thee never ythe,
For thou art worse a thousand fold than wood,
For many a one is full worthy and full good,
That had be naught ne had love ybe.

" For evermore Love his servants amendeth,
And from all evill taches hem defendeth,
And maketh hem to brenne right in a fire,
In trouth and in worshipfull desire,
And whan him liketh, joy inough him sendeth."

" Thou nightingale," he said, " be still,
For Love hath no reason, but it is will,
For oft time untrue folke he easeth,
And true folke so biterly he displeaseth,
That for default of courage he let hem spill.

" With suche a lord wulle I never be,
For he is blinde and may not se ;
And when he liethe he not ne when he fayletho ;
In his courte full seld trouthe availethe ;
So dyverse and so wilfull ys he "

Than tooke I of the nightingale keepe,
How she cast a sigh out of her deepe,
And said, " Alas, that ever I was bore,
I can for tene not say one word more,"
And right with that word she brast out to weepe.

" Alas," quod she, " my herte woll to breake,
To hearen thus this leud bird speake
Of Love, and of his worshipfull servise.
Now God of love, thou help me in some wise,
That I may on this cuckow been awreake."

Me thoght then that I stert out anon,
And to the broke I ran and gate a ston,
And at the Cuckow hertely I cast ;
And he for drede flie awey full fast,
And glad was I when that he was gon.

And evermore the Cuckow, as he fley,
He seid, " farewell, farewell, papyngay !"
As thogh he had skorryd thoght of me :
But ay I hunted him fro tre to tre
Till he was fer all out of sight awey.

And than came the nightingale to mee,
And said, " Friend, forsooth I thanke thee,
That thou hast liked me to rescow,
And one avow to Love make I now,
That all this May I woll thy singer be."

I thanked her, and was right well apaied :
" Ye," quod she, " and be thou not dismaied,
Tho thou have herd the cuckow erst than me,
For, if I live, it shall amended be
The next May, if I be not affraied.

" And one thing I woll rede thee also,
Ne leve thou not the cuckow, ne his loves so,
For all that he hath said is strong lesing :"
" Nay," quod I, " thereto shall nothing me bring,
For love, and it hath doe me much wo.

" Ye, use," quod she, " this medicine
Every day this May or thou dine,
Go looke upon the fresh daisie,
And though thou be for wo in point to die,
That shall full greatly lessen thee of thy pine.

" And looke alway that thou be good and trew,
And I woll sing one of the songes new
For love of thee, as loud as I may crie :"
And than she began this song full hie,
" I shrew all hem that been of love untrue."

And when she had song it to the end,
" Now farewell," quod she, " for I mote wend,
And god of love, that can right well, and may,
As much joy send thee this day,
As any lover yet he ever send."

Thus taketh the nightingale her leave of me,
I pray to God alway with her be,
And joy of love he send her evermore,
And shilde us fro the cuckow and his lore,
For there is not so false a bird as he.

Forth she flew, the gentle nightingale,
To all the birds that were in that dale,
And gate hem all into a place in fere,
And besoughten hem that they would here
Her disease, and thus began her tale.

"The cuckow, well it is not for to hide,
How the cuckow and I fast have chide
Ever sithen it was day light,
I pray you all that ye do me right
On that foule false unkind bridde."

Than spake o bird for all, by one assent,
"This matter asketh good avisement,
For we ben birdes here in fere,
And sooth it is, the cuckow is not here,
And therefore we woll have a parliment.

"And thereat shall the egle be our lord,
And other peres that been of record,
And the cuckow shall be after sent,
There shall be yeve the judgement,
Or els we shall finally make accord.

"And this shall be without nay,
The morrow after saint Valentines day,
Under a maple that is faire and grene,
Before the chamber window of the quene,
At Woodstocke upon the grene lay."

She thanked hem, and than her leave toke,
And into an hauthorne by that broke,
And there she sate and song upon that tree,
"Terme of life love hath withhold me,"
So loud that I with that song awoke.

EXPLICIT.

MINOR POEMS.

L'ENVOY DE CHAUCER À BUKTON.

My master Bukton, whan of Christ our king,
Was asked, what is troth or sothfastnesse,
He not a worde answerde to that asking,
As who saith, no man is all true, I gesse:
And therefore, though I hight to expresse
The sorrow and wo that is in mariage,
I dare not writen of it no wickednesse,
Lest I my selfe fall efte in suche dotage.

I woll not say how that it is the chaine
Of Sathanas, on which he knaweth ever,
But I dare saine, were he out of his paine,
As by his will he would be bounden never;
But thilke doted foole, that eft hath lever
Ychayned be, than out of prison crepe,
God let him never fro his wo discever,
Ne no man him bewayle, though he wepe.

But yet, lest thou doe worse, take a wife,
Bet is to wedde than brenne in worse wise.
But thou shalt have sorow on thy flesh thy life,
And ben thy wives thrale, as sain these wise,
And if that holy writ may not suffice,
Experience shall thee teach, so may happe,
Take the way lever to be taken in frise,
Than efte to fall of wedding in the trappe.

This little writte, proverbes or figures,
I sende you, take keepe of it I rede,
Unwise is he that can no wele endure,
If thou be siker, put thee not in drede,
The Wife of Bathe I pray you that ye rede
Of this matter that we have on honde,
God graunt you your lyfe freely to lede
In fredome, for foule is to be bonde.

EXPLICIT.

BALADE SENT TO K. RICHARD.

Sometime the world so stedfast was and stable,
That mannes word was an obligatioun,
And now it is so false and deceivable,
That word and deed, as in conclusioun,
Is nothing like, for tourned is up so doun
All the world, through mede and fikelnesse,
That all is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse.

What maketh the world to be so variable
But lust, that men have in dissension?
For among us a man is hold unable,
But if he can by some collusion
Doe his neighbour wrong and oppression:
What causeth this but wilfull wretchednesse
That all is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse?

Trouth is put downe, reason is hold fable,
Vertue hath now no domination,
Pity is exiled, no man is merciable,
Through covetise is blente discretion,
The world hath made a permutation,
Fro right to wrong, fro trouth to fikelnesse,
That all is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse.

L'ENVOYE.

Prince, desire to be honourable,
Cherish thy folke, and hate extortion,
Suffer nothing that may be reprovable
To thine estate, done in thy region,
Shew forth the yerd of castigation,
Drede God, do law, love trouth and worthinesse,
And wed thy folke ayen to stedfastnesse.

EXPLICIT.

GOOD COUNSAIL OF CHAUCER.

Fly fro the prease, and dwell with soothfastnesse,
Suffise unto thy good though it be small,
For horde hath hate, and climbing tikelnesse,
Prease hath envy, and wele is blent over all,
Savour no more than thee behove shall,
Rede well thy selfe that other folke canst rede,
And trouth thee shall deliver, it is no drede.

Paine thee not ech crooked to redresse
In trust of her that tourneth as a ball,
Great rest standeth in little businesse,
Beware also to spurne againe a nall,
Strive not as doth a crocke with a wall,
Deme thy selfe that demest others dede,
And trouth thee shall deliver, it is no drede.

That thee is sent receive in buxomnesse,
The wrastling of this world asketh a fall,
Here is no home, here is but wildernesse,
Forth, pilgrime! forth, beast, out of thy stall!
Looke up on high, and thanke God of all!
Weive thy lusts, and let thy ghost thee lede,
And trouth thee shall deliver, it is no drede.

EXPLICIT.

A BALLADE OF THE VILLAGE WITHOUT PAINTING.

PLAINTIFE TO FORTUNE.

This wretched worldes transmutation,
As wele and wo, now poor, and now honour,
Without order or due discretion,
Governed is by Fortunes errour,
But natheless, the lacke of her favour
Ne may not doe me sing, though that I die,
J'ay tout perdu, mon temps et mon labour,
For finally Fortune I defie.

Yet is me left the sight of my reasoun,
To know friend fro foe in thy mirrour,
So much hath yet thy tourning up and doun
Ytaught me to knowen in an hour,
But truly, no force of thy reddour
To him that over himselfe hath maistrie,
My suffisaunce shall be my succour,
For finally Fortune I defie.

O Socrates, thou stedfast champion,
She might never be thy turmentour,
Thou never dredest her oppression,
Ne in her chere found thou no favour,
Thou knew the deceit of her colour,
And that her moste worship is for to lie,
I know her eke a false dissimulour,
For finally Fortune I defie.

THE ANSWERE OF FORTUNE.

No man is wretched, but himselfe it wene,
Ne that hath in himselfe suffisaunce,
Why saist thou than I am to thee so kene,
That hast thy selfe out of my governance?
Say thus, graunt mercy of thine habundance
That thou hast lent, or this, thou shalt not strive,
What wost thou yet how I thee woll avance?
And eke thou hast thy best friend alive.

I have thee taught devision betweene
Friend of effect, and friend of countenaunce,
Thee needeth nat the gall of an hine,
That cureth eyen darke for her pennaunce,
Now seest thou clere that were in ignoraunce,
Yet holt thine anker, and yet thou maist arrive
There bounty beareth the key of my substance,
And eke thou hast thy best friend alive.

How many have I refused to sustene,
Sith I have thee fostred in thy pleasaunce!
Wolt thou than make a statute on thy quene,
That I shall be aye at thine ordinaunce?
Thou born art in my reigne of variaunce,
About the whele with other must thou drive,
My lore is bet than wicke is thy grevaunce,
And eke thou hast thy best friend alive.

THE ANSWERE TO FORTUNE.

Thy lore I dampne, it is adversity,
My frend maist thou not reve, blind goddesse,
That I thy friends know, I thanke it thee,
Take hem againe, let hem go lie a presse,
The niggardes in keeping hir richesse,
Pronostike is, thou wolt hir toure assaile,
Wicke appetite commeth aye before sicknesse,
In general this rule may not faile.

FORTUNE.

Thou pinchest at my mutability,
For I thee lent a droppe of my richesse,
And now me liketh to withdraw me,
Why shouldest thou my royalty oppresse?
The sea may ebbe and flow more and lesse,
The welken hath might to shine, rain, and hail,
Right so must I kithe my brotilnesse,
In generall this rule may not fail.

THE PLAINTIFE.

Lo, the execution of the majesty,
That all purveigheth of his rightwisenesse,
That same thing Fortune clepen ye,
Ye blind beasts, full of leaudnesse,
The Heaven hath property of sikernesse,
This world hath ever restlesse travaile,
The last day is end of mine entresse,
In generall this rule may not faile.

TH'ENVOYE OF FORTUNE.

Princes, I pray you of your gentilnesse
Let not this man and me thus cry and plain,
And I shall quite you this businesse,
And if ye liste releve him of his pain,
Pray ye his best frende, of his noblesse,
That to some better state he may attain.

L'ENVOY DE CHAUCER.

A SCOGAN.

Tobroken been the statutes hie in Heaven,
That create were eternally t'endure,
Sithe that I see the bright goddes seven
Mowe wepe and waile, and passion endure,
As may in yearth a mortall creature:
Alas, fro whens may this thing procede,
Of which errour I die almost for drede!

By word eterne, whilom, was it shape,
That fro the fifth cercle, in no manere,
Ne might of teares doune escape,
But now so weepeth Venus in her sphere,
That with her teares she wol drench us here.
Alas, Scogan, this is for thine offence,
Thou causest this deluge of pestilence.

Hast thou not said, in blaspheme of the goddis,
Through pride, or through thy gret rekelnes,
Such things as in the law of love forbode is,
That for thy lady saw not thy distresse,
Therfore thou yave her up at Mighelmesse?
Alas, Scogan, of olde folke ne yong,
Was never erst Scogan blamed for his tong.

Thou drew in scorne Cupide eke to record,
Of thilke rebell word that thou hast spoken,
For which he woll no lenger be thy lord,
And Scogan, though his bow be not broken,
He woll not with his arowes be ywroken
On thee ne me, ne none of our figure,
We shall of him have neither hurte ne cure.

Now certes, frend, I drede of thine unhape,
Lest for thy gilte the wreche of love procede
On all hem that been hore and round of shape,
That be so likely folke to spede,
Than we shall of our labour have our mede,
But well I wot, thou wolt answere and say,
Lo, old Grisell list to renne and play.

Nay, Scogan, say not so, for I me excuse,
God helpe me so, in no rime doubtles,
Ne thinke I never of sleepe wake my muse,
That rusteth in my sheath still in pees,
While I was yong I put her forth in prees,
But all shall passe that men prose or rime,
Take every man his tourne as for his time.

Scogan, thou knelest at the stremes hedde
Of grace, of all honour, and of worthiness,
In th'ende of which I am dull as dedde,
Forgotten in solitary wildernesse,
Yet, Scogan, thinke on Tullius' kindness,
Mind thy frende there it may fructifie,
Farewel, and looke thou never eft love defie.

EXPLICIT.

TO HIS EMPTY PURSE.

To you, my purse, and to none other wight
Complaine I, for ye be my lady dere,
I am sorry now that ye be light,
For, certes, ye now make me heavy chere,
Me were as lefe laid upon a bere,
For which unto your mercy thus I crie,
Be heavy againe, or els mote I die.

Now vouchsafe this day or it be night,
That I of you the blissful sowne may here,
Or see your colour like the Sunne bright,
That of yelowness had never pere,
Ye be my life, ye be my hertes stere,
Queene of comfort and of good companie,
Be heavy againe, or els mote I die.

Now purse, that art to me my lives light,
And saviour, as downe in this world here,
Out of this towne helpe me by your might,
Sith that you woll not be my treasure,
For I am shave as nere as any frere,
But I pray unto your curtesie,
Be heavy againe, or els mote I die.

EXPLICIT.

A BALLAD

MADE BY CHAUCER, TEACHING WHAT IS GENTILNESS, OR WHOM IS WORTHY TO BE CALLED GENTILL.

THE first stocke father of gentilnes,
What man desireth gentil for to bee,
Must followe his trace, and all his wittes dres
Vertue to love and vices for to flee,
For unto vertue longeth dignitee,
And not the revers falsly, dare I deme,
All weare he miter, crowne, or diademe.

This first stocke was full of rightwisnes,
Trewe of his worde, sober, pitous and free,
Clene of his goste, and loved besinesse,
Against the vice of slouth in honeste,
And, but his heire love vertue as did he,
He is not gentill, though he rich seme,
All weare he miter, crowne, or diademe.

Viceste may well be heir to old richesse,
But there may no man, as men may wel see,
Bequethe his heire his vertues noblenesse,
That is appropried unto no degree,
But to the first father in majestee,
That maketh his heires them that him queme,
All weare he miter, crowne, or diademe.

EXPLICIT.

PROVERBES

AGAINST COVETISE AND NEGLIGENCE.

'HAT shall these clothes manifold,
›, this hote somers day ?
fter great heat commeth cold,
› man cast his pilche away.
: all this world the large compasse
will not in mine armes twaine ;
'ho so mokel woll embrace,
itel thereof he shall distraine.

EXPLICIT.

UCER'S WORDS UNTO HIS OWN SCRIVENER.

M Scrivener, if ever it thee befall
:e or Troilus for to write new,
er thy long locks thou maist have the scall,
after my making thou write more trew,
ft a day I mote thy werke renew,
correct and eke to rubbe and scrape,
all is thorow thy negligence and rape.

VIRELAI.

ALONE walking,
In thought plaining,
And sore sighing,
All desolate :

Me remembring
Of my living,
My death wishing,
Both early and late :

Infortunate
Is so my fate
That wote ye what ?
Out of measure

My life I hate :
Thus desperate,
In such poor estate
Do I endure.

Of other cure
Am I not sure,
Thus to endure
Is hard certain.

Such is my ure,
I you ensure,
What creature
May have more pain ?

My truth so plain
Is taken in vain,
And great disdain
In remembraunce,

Yet I full fain,
Would me complain,
Me to abstain
From this penaunce.

But in substaunce,
None allegeaunce
Of my grevaunce
Can I not find.

Right so my chaunce
With displesaunce
Doth me avaunce,
And thus an end.

GLOSSARY.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Glossary is intended to facilitate the reading of Chaucer, by explaining, in our present language, such of his words and phrases as are now become difficult to be understood, either from a total disuse, or from any smaller alterations of orthography or inflexion. Many of these words and phrases having been already explained in the Notes of this edition, it has been thought sufficient in that case to refer the reader to those Notes. For the rest, it is hoped that this work may be of use in removing some of the most material difficulties, which occur, not only in the Canterbury Tales, but also in the other *genuine*[1] compositions of Chaucer, as far as the present state of their text makes it safe to attempt any explanation of them.

It would be injustice to the learned author of the Glossary to Mr. Urry's edition[2], not to acknowledge, that I have built upon his foundations, and often with his materials. In particular, I have followed, and have endeavoured to improve upon, his example, by constantly citing one or more places, in which the word or phrase explained is to be found[3]. Where the places cited by him were apposite and satisfactory, I have generally spared myself the trouble of hunting for others, with this caution however, that I have not made use of any one of his references without having first verified it by actual inspection; a caution which every compiler ought to take in all cases, and which in the present case was indispensably necessary, on account of the numerous and gross errors in the text of that edition[4] to which Mr. Thomases Glossary was adapted.

For the further prevention of uncertainty and confusion, care has been taken to mark the part of speech to which each word belongs, and to distribute all homonymous words into separate articles[5]. The numbers, cases, modes, times, and other inflexions of the declinable parts of speech are also marked, whenever they are expressed in a manner differing from modern usage.

Etymology is so clearly not a necessary branch of the duty of a Glossarist, that, I trust, I shall be easily excused for not having troubled the reader with longer or more frequent digressions of that sort. In general, I have thought it sufficient to mark shortly the original language from which each word is probably to be derived, according to the hypothesis, which has

---

[1] At the end of this advertisement I shall add a short *Account of* what I conceive to be *the genuine works of Chaucer*, and of those which have been either falsely ascribed to him, or improperly mixed with his, in the Editions. Those under the two latter descriptions may be of use to illustrate the works of Chaucer, but should not be confounded with them.

[2] Mr. Timothy Thomas. See App. to the Preface. A note [a].

[3] The expediency of this practice is obvious. It enables the reader to apprehend more clearly the interpretation of the Glossarist, when right; and it affords him an opportunity of correcting those mistakes, to which we are all so exceedingly liable.

[4] See App. to the Preface. A. p. viii.

[5] The neglect of this precaution, and of that just mentioned, has made Mr. Hearne's Glossaries to *Robert of Gloucester* and *Robert of Brunne* of very little use. Who would place any confidence in such interpretations as the following?—R. G. ar. *as, after, before, ere, till.* bet. *better, bid, bad, desired, prayed, be, are.*—P. L. ame. *aim, esteem, love, desire, reckon'd, aim'd, fathom, tell.* biden. *biting, abiding, tarrying, bidding, praying, bidden, being bidden, being desired, continually, commanded, judged, adjudged, readily.*

been more fully explained in the Essay, &c. *Part the second*, that the *Norman-Saxon* dialect in which Chaucer wrote, was almost entirely composed of words derived from the *Saxon* and *French* languages[6].

As every author must be allowed to be the best expositor of his own meaning, I have always endeavoured to establish the true import of any doubtful word or phrase by the usage of Chaucer himself in some other similar passage. Where it has been necessary to call in foreign assistance, recourse has been chiefly had to such authors as wrote before him, or at least were contemporary with him in some part of his life[7].

The proper names of persons and places, as they occur in Chaucer, are often either so obscure in themselves, or so disguised by a vitious orthography, that they stand in as much need of an interpreter as the most obsolete appellative. Some other proper names, particularly of authors quoted, though sufficiently known and clear, have been inserted in this Glossary, in order to make it, in that respect, answer the purposes of an Index.

As there are several passages, of which, after all my researches, I am unable to give any probable explanation, I shall follow the laudable example of the learned Editor of "*Ancient Scottish Poems* from the MS. of *George Bannatyne*. Edinb. 1770." by subjoining a list of such words and phrases as I profess not to understand. I only wish the reader may not find occasion to think, that I ought to have made a considerable addition to the number.

I will just add, for the sake of those who may be disposed to make use of this Glossary in reading the works of Chaucer not contained in this edition, that it will be found to be almost equally well adapted to every edition of those works, except Mr. Urry's. Mr. Urry's edition should never be opened by any one for the purpose of reading Chaucer.

1778. T. TYRWHITT.

---

[6] A few words are marked as having been taken immediately from the *Latin* language. The number has increased very considerably since the time of Chaucer. It is observable, that the *verbs* of this sort are generally formed from the *participle past*, whereas those which have come to us through France are as generally formed from the *infinitive mode*.

In referring words to the other two great classes a precise accuracy has not been attempted. The small remains of the genuine *Anglo-Saxon* language, which our lexicographers have been able to collect, do not furnish authorities for a multitude of words, which however may be fairly derived from that source, because they are to be found with little variation in the other collateral languages descended from the *Gothic*. The term Saxon therefore is here used with such a latitude as to include the *Gothic*, and *all its branches*. At the same time, as the *Francic* part of the *French* language had a common original with the *Anglo-Saxon*, it happens that some words may be denominated either French or Saxon with almost equal probability. In all such cases, the final judgement is left to those, who have leisure and inclination (according to our author's phrase ver. 15246.) *to boult* the matter *to the bren*.

[7] Some of these authors have been pointed ou in the Essay, &c. §. viii. n. 24. Of the others the most considerable are, the author of the *Visions of Pierce Ploughman*, Gower, Occleve, and Lydgate.

In the Essay, &c. n. 57. a circumstance is mentioned, which shews that the *Visions of Pierce Ploughman* were written after 1350. I have since taken notice of a passage which will prove, I think, that they were written after 1362. The great storm of wind, alluded to in fol. xx. b. l. 14.

And the Southwesterne winde on Satterdaie at even, &c. is probably the storm recorded by Thorn, *inter x Script.* c. 2122. Walsingham, p. 178. and most particularly by the Continuator of Adam Murimuth, p. 115.

A.D. M.CCC.LXII.—XV. die Januarii, *circa horam vesperarum*, ventus vehemens *notus Australis Africus* tanti rabie erupit, &c.

The 15th of January in the year 1362, N. S. was a *Saturday*.

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

WORKS OF CHAUCER

TO WHICH

THIS GLOSSARY IS ADAPTED;

AND OF THOSE OTHER PIECES WHICH HAVE BEEN IMPROPERLY INTERMIXED WITH HIS IN THE EDITIONS.

Of the CANTERBURY TALES, the greatest work of Chaucer, it is needless to repeat what has been said in different parts of this Edition; particularly in the *App. to the Preface*, A. and in the *Introductory Discourse*. One of the earliest of his other works was probably

I. THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE. He speaks of it himself in L.W. 329 and 441. It is professedly a translation of the French *Roman de la Rose*, and many gross blunders in the printed text may be corrected by comparing it with the original. Dr. Hunter was so obliging as to lend me a MS. of this poem, the only one that I have ever heard of, which has occasionally been consulted to good advantage; but it does not supply any of the most material defects of the printed Editions. See page 209.

II. TROILUS AND CRESEIDE, in v. Books. This Poem is also mentioned by our author in L.W. 332 and 441. It is for the most part a translation of the *Filostrato* of Boccace; but with many variations, and such large additions, that it contains above 2700 lines more than its original. See the Essay, &c. n. 62. and page 209.

There are several MSS. of this poem in the Bodleian Library and in the Museum, which have been occasionally consulted.

III. THE COURT OF LOVE was first printed among the additions made to Chaucer's works by John Stowe, in the Edition of 1561. One might reasonably have expected to find it mentioned in L.W. *loc. cit.* but notwithstanding the want of that testimony in its favour, I am induced by the internal evidence to consider it as one of Chaucer's genuine productions. I have never heard of any MS. of this poem.

IV. THE COMPLAINT OF PITEE. So this Poem is entitled in MS. *Harl.* 78. It is extant also in MS. *Bodl.* Fairf. 16. The subject is alluded to in the *Court of Love*, ver. 700. seq.

V. OF QUENE ANNELIDA AND FALSE ARCITE, with the COMPLAINT OF ANNELIDA. The story of this poem is said in ver. 10. to have been originally in Latin; and in ver. 21. Chaucer names the authors whom he professes to follow. "*Firste folwe I* STACE *and after him* CORINNE." As the opening only is taken from Statius, L. IV. v. 519, we must suppose that *Corinne* furnished the remainder; but who *Corinne* was is not easy to guess. See the Gloss. in v. CORINNE. It should be observed, that the *Arcite*, whose infidelity is here complained of, is quite a different person from the *Arcite* of the *Knightes tale*; from which circumstance we may perhaps be allowed to infer, that this poem was written before Chaucer had met with the Theseida.

It is extant in MSS. *Harl.* 372. and *Bodl.* Fairf. 16.

VI. THE ASSEMBLEE OF FOULES is mentioned by Chaucer himself in L.W. 419. under the title of "*The Parlement of foules.*" In MS. *Bodl.* Fairf. 16. it is entitled "*The Parlement of Briddes.*"

The opening of this poem is built upon the *Somnium Scipionis* of Cicero, as it appears at the head of Macrobiuses commentary. The description of a *Garden* and *Temple*, from ver. 183 to ver. 287, is almost entirely taken from Boccaces description of the Temple of Venus in the VII book of the Theseida. See the note on ver. 1920. I have found no reason to retract the suspicion there intimated as to the date of this poem; nor can I confirm it by any external evidence.

VII. THE COMPLAINT OF THE BLACK KNIGHT, in MSS. *Bodl.* Fairf. 16. and Bod. 638. is entitled "*Complaint of a lover's life.*" I do not wish much confidence to be given to the conjecture, in App. to the Pref. C. n.* that this poem relates to John of Gaunt.

VIII. CHAUCER'S A. B. C. was first printed in Mr. Speght's 2d Edit. in 1602. It is said, in the title, to have been composed *at the request of the Duchesse Blanche.* If that be true, it ought to be placed before

IX. THE BOOKE OF THE DUCHESSE, which Chaucer himself has mentioned by the title of "*The deth of Blaunche the Duchesse.*" L.W. 418. See an account of this poem in the n. on ver. 4467. and page 209.

X. THE HOUSE OF FAME is mentioned by Chaucer himself in L.W. 417. It was probably written while he was comptroller of the custom of wools, and consequently not earlier than 1374. See the passage from B. II. quoted in the App. to the Pref. C. n. *. It is extant in MSS. *Bodl.* Fairf. 16. and Bod. 638.

XI. CHAUCER'S DREME was first printed in Mr. Speght's Edit. of his works in 1597. Bale seems to speak of it under the title, "*De castello dominarum.* Lib. i." The supposed plan of this poem, prefixed to it by Mr. Speght, is a mere fancy; but there is no ground for doubting the authenticity of the poem itself.

When I imagined that a passage in this Dreme, ver. 1820—1926, was probably copied from the *Lay of Elidus* (Discourse, &c. n. 24.) I did not recollect, that the incident there related is very similar to one in the Grecian fabulous history (See Hyginus, fab. CXXXVI. *de Polyido.*) and therefore might easily have come to Chaucer through some other channel.

XII. THE FLOUR AND THE LEFE was also printed for the first time in the Edit. of 1597; but I do not think its authenticity so clear as that of the preceding poem. The subject, at least, is alluded to by Chaucer in L.W. 188—194.

XIII. THE LEGENDE OF GOODE WOMEN is extant in MSS. *Bodl.* Arch. Seld. B. 24. and Fairf. 16. For the time of its composition see the Discourse, &c. n. 3. See also the n. on ver. 4481. An additional argument, for believing that the number intended was *nineteen*, may be drawn from the *Court of Love*, ver. 108. where, speaking of *Alceste*, Chaucer says—

"To whom obeyed *the ladies gode ninetene.*"

XIV. THE COMPLAINT OF MARS AND VENUS is said, in the conclusion, to have been translated from the French of *Graunson;* probably that *Otho de Graunson*, who was retained in the military service of Richard II, with an annuity of 200 marks. Pat. 17. R. II. p. 1. m. 6. ap. Rymer. Mr. Speght mentions a tradition, if I understand him right, that this poem was originally made of the Lady *Elizabeth*, daughter to *John of Gaunt*, whom he calls *King of Spaine*, and her husband the Lord *John Holland*, half-brother to Richard II. I cannot see any thing in the poem itself that countenances this particular notion, though I have little doubt, that it was intended to describe the situation of *some* two lovers under a veil of mystical allegory.

This poem is extant in MSS. *Bodl.* Arch. Seld. B. 24. and Fairf. 16. In MS. *Harl.* 7333 it is entitled "*The broche of Thebes as of the love of Mars and Venus;*" which inclines me to believe,

that it is the poem, mentioned by Lydgate, and from him by Bale, which has of late been supposed to be lost. Lydgate's words are—

> Of *Annelida* and of false *Arcite*
> He made a *complaynt* dolefull and piteous,
> And of *the broche* which that *Vulcanus*
> At *Thebes* wrought, full divers of nature.
>
> Prol. to *Trag.* Sign. A. ii. b.

From this passage Bale, as I suppose, deceived by the ambiguous sense of the word *broche*, has attributed to Chaucer a poem "*De Vulcani veru;*" of Vulcan's *spit*. He should have said "*De Vulcani gemmâ*, or *monili*." See BROCHE in the Glossary.

This *broche of Thebes*, from which the whole poem is here supposed to have taken its title, is described at large in the *Complaint of Mars*, ver. 93—109. The *first idea* of it seems to have been derived from what Statius has said of the *fatal necklace* made by *Vulcan* for Harmonia. Theb. II. 265—305. Lydgate refers us to *Ovide;* but I cannot find anything in him upon the subject.

XV. THE CUCKOW AND THE NIGHTINGALE in MS. Fairf. 16. is entitled "*The boke of Cupide God of Love.*" It is extant also in MS. Bod. 638. and as far as ver. 235. in Arch. Seld. B. 24. and might be much improved and augmented with some lines from those MSS. The Ballade of three Stanzas with an Envoye, which seems to belong to this poem in the Editt. does not appear at all in MS. Bod. 638. In MS. Fairf. 16. it is at the end of the *Booke of the Duchesse.* I cannot believe that it was written by Chaucer.

Beside these more considerable works, it appears from L.W. 422. 430. that our author had composed many "*balades, roundels, virelayes;*" that he had "*made many a lay and many a thing.*" A few pieces of this sort are still extant, but hardly any, I think, of so early a date as the Legende. I will set them down here as they stand in the Editt.

1. *L'Envoy de Chaucer à Bukton.* Beginning,

My maister Bukton, whan of Christ, &c.

So this little poem is entitled in MS. Fairf. 16. It has always been printed at the end of the *Booke of the Duchesse*, with an &c. in the first line instead of the name of *Bukton;* and in Mr. Urry's Edit. the following most unaccountable note is prefixed to it. "This seems an Envoy to the Duke of *Lancaster* after his loss of *Blanch.*"

From the reference to the *Wife of Bathe*, ver. 29. I should suppose this to have been one of our author's later compositions, and I find that there was a *Peter de Buketon*, the King's Escheator for the County of York, in 1397, (Pat. 20 R. II. p. 2. m. 3. ap. Rymer.) to whom this poem, from the familiar style of it, is much more likely to have been addressed than to the Duke of Lancaster.

2. *Balade sent to King Richard.*

Beginn. *Sometime the world*, &c.

So this poem is entitled in MS. Harl. E. It is extant also in Fairf. 16. and in Cotton. Otho. A. XVIII.

3. *Balade* beginning—*Fle fro the prese*, &c.

In MS. Cotton. Otho. A. XVIII. this balade is said to have been made by Chaucer "*upon his death-bed lying in his anguish;*" but of such a circumstance some further proof should be required. It is found, without any such note, in MS. Arch. Seld. B. 24. and Fairf. 16.

4. *Balade of the village.*

Beginn. *This wretched worldes*, &c.

It is extant in MS. Fairf. 16. and Bod. 638. In MS. Ashmol. 59. it is said to have been *translated from the French.* Tanner, in v. CHAUCER.

5. *L'Envoy de Chaucer à Skogan.*

Beginn. *Tobroken ben the Statutes*, &c.

So this poem is entitled in MS. Fairf. 16. Among a number of people of all sorts, who had

letters of protection to attend Richard II. upon his expedition to Ireland in 1399, is *Henricus Scogan, Armiger*. This jocose expostulation was probably addressed to him by our author some years before, when Scogan's interest at court may be supposed to have been better than his own.

6. *Chaucer to his emptie purse.*

Beginn. *To you, my purse*, &c.

This balade is extant in MS. Fairf. 16. and in Cotton. Otho. A. XVIII. The *Envoy* appears to be addressed to Henry the 4th.

7. Balade beginning—*The firste stock*, &c.

These three stanzas have been preserved in a "*Moral Balade by Henry Scogan*;" of which some notice will be taken below.

8. *Proverbes by Chaucer.*

Beginn. *What shal these clothes*, &c.

So this little piece is entitled in MS. Harl. 7578. It evidently contains two distinct *Proverbs* or *Moral Admonitions*.

9. *Chaucer's wordes to his Scrivenere.*

Beginn. *Adam Scrivenere*, &c.

A proof of his attention to the correctness of his writings. See also T. V. 1794, 5.

The works of Chaucer in prose are,

I. A TRANSLATION OF BOETHIUS *de consolatione Philosophiæ*, which he has mentioned himself in L.W. ver. 425.

II. A TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE, addressed to his son *Lowis*, in 1391. It is plain from what is said at the beginning of this treatise, that the printed copies do not contain more than two of the five parts, of which it was intended to consist.

III. THE TESTAMENT OF LOVE is evidently an imitation of Boethius *de consolatione Philosophiæ*. It seems to have been begun by our author after his troubles, in the middle part of the reign of Richard II, and to have been finished about the time that Gower published his *Confessio Amantis*, in the 16th year of that reign. At least it must then have been far advanced, as Gower mentions it by its title. *Conf. Am.* 190. b.

The foregoing I consider as the genuine works of Chaucer. Of those, which have been improperly intermixed with his in the Editions, the following are known to be the works of other authors.

1. *The Testament and Complaint of Creseide* appears from ver. 41. not to have been written by Chaucer; and Mr. Urry was informed "by Sir James Ereskin, late Earl of Kelly, and diverse aged scholars of the Scottish nation," that the true author was "Mr. ROBERT HENDERSON, chief School-master of Dumferlin, a little time before Chaucer was first printed, and dedicated to King Henry VIII. by Mr. Thynne." I suppose, the same person is meant that is called ROBERT HENRYSONE in "*Ancient Scottish Poems*," where several of his compositions may be seen, from p. 98 to p. 138.

2. *The Floure of Courtesie* is said, in the title, to have been *made by* JOHN LYDGATE.

3. *La Belle Dame sans mercie*, a translation from Alain Chartier, is attributed in MS. *Harl.* 372. to Sir RICHARD ROS. See App. to the Pref. C. note [n]. Upon looking further into Alain's works I find a Balade upon the taking of Fougieres by the English in 1448 (*Oeuvres d'Al. Chartier*, p. 717.); so that he was certainly living near *fifty* years after Chaucer's death; which makes it quite incredible that the latter should have translated any thing of his.

4. *The Letter of Cupide* is dated in 1402, two years after Chaucer's death. It was written by THOMAS OCCLEVE, who mentions it himself, as one of his own compositions, in a *Dialogue*, which follows his *Complaint*. MS. *Bodl.* 1504.

> "Yes, *Thomas*, yes, in the *epistle of Cupide*
> Thou hast of hem so largelich seid."

5. JOHN GOWER *unto the noble King Henry the 4th*, with some Latin verses of the same author.

6. *Sayings of* DAN JOHN (LYDGATE).

7. SCOGAN *unto the lordes and gentlemen of the Kynges house.*

So the title of this poem is expressed in the old Editt. but, according to Mr. Speght, *in the written copies* it is thus; "Here followeth a moral balade to the *Prince*, the Duke of *Clarence*, the Duke of *Bedford*, the Duke of *Glocester*, the King's sonnes; by *Henry Scogan*, at a supper among the Marchants in the Vintry at London in the house of *Lewis John*." This cannot be quite accurate; as neither of the two younger sons of Henry IV. had the title of *Duke* while their eldest brother was *Prince;* but I find that there was, about that time, a *Lewis John*, a Welshman, who was naturalized by act of Parliament, 2 H. V. and who was concerned with Thomas Chaucer in the execution of the office of Chief Butler. *Rot. Parl.* 2 H. V. n. 18. The same person, probably, was appointed Remitter of all monies that should be sent to Rome for three years. Ap. Rymer. *an. eodem.*

The article concerning Skogan in Tanner's Bibl. Brit. is a heap of confusion. He is there called *John;* is said to have been a *Master of Arts* of Oxford and *jester* to K. Edward VI. (perhaps a misprint for IV); to have been contemporary with Chaucer, and famous in the year 1480. In a collection of foolish stories, which is supposed to have been first published by Dr. Andrew Borde, in the time of Henry VIII, under the title of *Scogan's jests*, he is called *Thomas;* and there too he is represented as a Graduate, I think, of Oxford, and as jester to some King, but without any circumstances sufficient to determine what King is meant.

I am inclined to believe that the Scogan, who wrote this poem, is rightly named *Henry* in Mr. Speght's MS. As to the two circumstances of his having been a *Master of Arts* of Oxford and *jester* to a King, I can find no older authority for either than Dr. Borde's book. That he was contemporary with Chaucer, but so as to survive him for several years, perhaps till the reign of Henry V, is sufficiently clear from this poem.

Shakespeare seems to have followed the jest-book, in considering Scogan as a mere buffoon, when he mentions, as one of Falstaff's boyish exploits, that he "broke Scogan's head at the Court-gate;" (2d Part of Henry IV. A. 3.) but Jonson has given a more dignified, and, probably, a juster account of his situation and character. *Masque of the Fortunate Isles,* Vol. VI. p. 192.

> *Mere-fool.* Skogan? what was he?
> *Johphiel.* O, a fine gentleman and master of arts
> Of Henry the fourth's time, that made disguises
> For the king's sons, and writ in ballad-royal
> Daintily well.
> *Mere-fool.* But wrote he like a gentleman?
> *Johphiel.* In rhime, fine tinkling rhime and flowand verse,
> With now and then some sense; and he was paid for 't,
> Regarded and rewarded; which few poets
> Are now a-days.

This description of Skogan corresponds very well with the ideas which would naturally be suggested by the perusal of the poem before us, and of that addressed to him by Chaucer. See above, p. 447. And indeed I question whether Jonson had any other good foundation for what he has said of him.

8. *A balade of goode counseil, translated out of Latin verses into English, by* DAN JOHN LYDGATE.

9. *A balade made in the preise, or rather dispreise, of women for their doubleness;* by LYDGATE, according to MS. Ashmol. 6943.

10. *A balade warning men to beware of deceitful women;* by LYDGATE, according to MS. Harl. 2251.

To these, which are known to be the works of other authors, we should perhaps add an 11th, viz. *Balade in commendation of our Ladie;* as a poem with the same beginning is ascribed to LYDGATE, under the title of "*Invocation to our Lady.*" Tanner, in v. LYDGATE.

The anonymous compositions, which have been from time to time added to Chaucer's in the several Editt. seem to have been received, for the most part, without any external evidence whatever, and in direct contradiction to the strongest internal evidence. Of this sort are "*The Plowman's tale*," first printed in 1542: See the Discourse, &c. §. XL. n. 32. "*The Story of Gamelyn*," and "*The Continuation of the Canterbury Tales*," first printed in Mr. Urry's Edition: "*Jack Upland*," first produced by Mr. Speght in 1602. I have declared my suspicion, in the Gloss. v. ORIGENES, that the "*Lamentation of Marie Magdalene*" was not written by Chaucer; and I am still clearer that the "*Assemblee of Ladies*," "*A Praise of Women*," and the "*Remedie of Love*," ought not to be imputed to him. It would be a waste of time to sift accurately the heap of rubbish, which was added, by John Stowe, to the Edit. of 1561. Though we might perhaps be able to pick out two or three genuine fragments of Chaucer, we should probably find them so soiled and mangled *, that he would not thank us for asserting his claim to them.

* As a specimen of the care and discernment, with which Mr. Stowe's collections were made, I would refer the curious reader to what is called a *Balade*, fol. 324. b. Ed. Sp.

Beginn. *O merciful and o merciable.*

The four first stanzas are found in different parts of an imperfect poem upon the *Fall of Man*. MS. Harl. 2251. n. 138. The 11th stanza makes part of an *Envoy*, which in the same MS. n. 37. is annexed to the poem entitled "*The Craft of Lovers*," among the Additions to Chaucer's works, by J. Stowe; which poem, by the way, though printed with a date of 1347, and ascribed to Chaucer, has in the MS. a much more probable date of 1459, near sixty years after Chaucer's death.

There is one little piece, perhaps by Chaucer, fol. 224. Ed. Sp.

Beginn. *Alone walking, In thought plaining*, &c.

which comes nearer to the description of a *Virelay*, than anything else of his that has been preserved. See the book quoted in the Gloss. v. *Virelaye*.

EXPLANATION OF THE ABBREVIATIONS

BY WHICH THE WORKS OF CHAUCER AND SOME OTHER BOOKS ARE GENERALLY CITED IN THE FOLLOWING GLOSSARY.

The Arabian numerals, without any letter prefixed, refer to the verses of the Canterbury Tales in this Edition.

		Edit. 8 p. 1602.
A. B. C.	—Chaucer's A. B. C,	fol. 347
A. F.	—Assemblee of Foules,	233
An.	—Annelida and Arcite,	243 b.
Astr.	—Treatise on the Astrolabe,	249
Bal. Vil.	—Balade of the Village,	319 b.
Ber.	—The History of Beryn, Edit. Urr. p. 600.	
B. K.	—Complaint of the Black Knight,	257 b.
Bo.	—Translation of Boethius, 5 Books,	197 b.
C. D.	—Chaucer's Dreme,	334
C. L.	—Court of Love,	327
C. M.	—Complaint of Mars,	309 b.
C. M. V.	—Complaint of Mars and Venus,	308 b.
C. N.	—Cuckow and Nightingale,	316 b.
Cotg.	—Cotgrave's Fr. and Eng. Dictionary.	
Conf. Am.	—Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, Edit. 1532.	
C. V.	—Complaint of Venus,	310
Du.	—The Book of the Duchesse, commonly called, *The Dreme of Chaucer*,	227
F.	—The House of Fame, 3 Books,	262
F. L.	—The Flour and Leaf,	344
Gam.	—The Tale of Gamelyn, Edit. Urr. p. 36.	
Jun. Etymol.	—Junii Etymologicon Ling. Angl. by Lye.	
Kilian.	—Kiliani Etymologicum Ling. Teuton.	
L. W.	—Legende of good Women,	185
Lydg. *Trag.*	—Lydgate's Translation of Boccace *De casibus virorum illustrium*, Edit. J. Wayland.	
M.	—The Tale of Melibeus, p. 106.	
Magd.	—Lamentation of Marie Magdalene,	302
P.	—The Persones Tale, p. 148.	
P. L.	—Translation of Peter of Langtoft, by Robert of Brunne. Ed. Hearne.	
P. P.	—Visions of Pierce Ploughman, Edit. 1550.	

Prompt Parv.—*Promptorium Parvulorum sive Clericorum*. MS. Harl. 221. A dictionary, in which many hundreds of English words are translated into Latin, compiled in 1440, by a Frier Preacher, a Recluse, at Lynne in Norfolk. He gives notice in his preface, that *his English* is that spoken in the *East country*; and accord-

ingly his orthography will be found to differ very much from Chaucer's. His name was *Richard Fraunces*, if we may believe a MS. note cited by Hearne, Gloss. to P. L. v. *Nesshe*; who has there also given an account of an edition of this dictionary, printed by Pynson in 1509. Dr. Hunter has a copy of it.

Prov.	—Proverbes by Chaucer, ...	321 b.
R.	—The Romaunt of the Rose, ...	109
R. G.	—Robert of Glocester's Chronicle. Ed. Hearne.	
Sk.	—Skinner's *Etymologicon Ling. Angl.*	
Sp.	—Speght, the Editor of Chaucer.	
T.	—Troilus and Creseide, 5 Books, ...	143
T. L.	—Testament of Love, 3 Books, ...	271 b.
Ur.	—Urry, the Editor of Chaucer.	

GLOSSARY.

A, WHICH is commonly called the *Indefinite Article*, is really nothing more than a corruption of the Saxon *Adjective* ANE, or AN, before a Substantive beginning with a consonant.

It is sometimes prefixed to another Adjective; the Substantive, to which both belong, being understood. ver. 208.

A Frere there was, A WANTON *and* A MERY. See ver. 165, and the note.

It is also joined to *Nouns plural*, taken collectively; as, *An hundred frankes*, ver. 13201. *A thousand frankes*, ver. 13206.—and to such as are not used in the singular number; as, *A listes*, ver. 1715. See the Note. So the Latins said, *Unæ literæ*, Cic. ad Att. v. 9. and the French, formerly, *unes lices; unes lettres; unes trêves*. Froissart. v. i. c. 153. 237. v. ii. c. 78.

A, *prep.* before a *Gerund*, is a corruption of ON. *To go* A BEGGING. 11884. R. 6719. i. e. *on begging*. The *prep.* is often expressed at length. ON HUNTING *ben they ridden*. 1689. *To ride* ON HAWKING. 13667.

In the same manner, before a *noun* it is generally a corruption of ON or IN. *A'bed*. 5989, 6509. *A'fire*. 6308. *A'Goddes name*. 17267. *A'morwe*. 824. *A'night*. 5784. *A'werke*. 4335, 5797. though in some of these instances perhaps it may as well be supposed to be a corruption of AT.

A in composition, in words of Saxon original, is an abbreviation of AF, or OF; of AT; of ON, or IN; and often only a corruption of the prepositive particle GE, or Y. In words of French original, it is generally to be deduced from the Latin AB, AD, and sometimes EX.

A, *Interj.* Ah! 1080. 9109.

ABACKE, *adv.* SAX. Backwards. L. W. 864.

ABAIST, *part. pa.* FR. Abashed, ashamed. 8193. 8887.

ABATE, *v.* FR. To beat down.

ABAWED, *part. pa.* FR. *Esbahi*. Astonished. R. 3646. *I was* ABAWED *for marveile*. Orig. *Moult* M'ESBAHY *de la merveille*.

ABEOGE, ABEYE, ABIE, *v.* SAX. To suffer for. 3936. 12034. 16162.

ABET, *n.* SAX. Help. T. ii. 357.

ABIDE, *v.* SAX. To stay. 3131,3.

ABIDDEN, } *part. pa.* { T. ii. 935.
ABIDEN, } { 2984. 9762.

ABIT for ABIDETH. 16643. R. 4977.

ABLE, *adj.* FR. Fit, proper. 167. R. 966.

ABOTE, *part. pa.* of ABATE. C. D. 1290.

ABOUGHT, *part. pa.* of ABEOGE. 2305.

ABOUTEN, *prep.* SAX. On-butan. About. 2191. 4146.

ABRAIDE, *v.* SAX. To awake; to start. 4188. See BRAIDE.

——— *pa. t.* Awaked, started. 8937. 10791. 15014.

ABREDE, *adv.* SAX. Abroad. R. 2563.

ABREGE, *v.* FR. To shorten, to abridge. 9531.

ABROCHE, *v.* FR. To tap, to set abroach; spoken of a vessel of liquor. 5759.

ABUSION, *n.* FR. Abuse, impropriety. T. iv. 990.

ACCESSE, *n.* FR. Properly, the approach of a fever; *A fever*. B. K. 136.

ACCIDIE, *n.* FR. from Ακηδια, Gr. Negligence; arising from discontent, melancholy, &c. P. 161, col. 2, l. 62. seq.

ACCORD, *n.* FR. Agreement. 840.

——— *v.* FR. To agree. 832.

ACCORDEDEN, *pa. t. pl.* L. W. 168.

ACCORDANT, } *part. pr.* { 10417.
ACCORDING, } { 6506.

ACCUSE, *v.* FR. To discover. R. 1591.

ACHATE, *n.* FR. Purchase. 573.

ACHATOUR, *n.* FR. A purchaser; a caterer. 570.

ACHEKED, *part. pa.* SAX. Choaked. L. W. 2006.

ACHEVE, *v.* FR. To accomplish. R. 2049. 4600.

ACKELE *(Akele)*, *v.* SAX. To cool. C. L. 1076.

ACLOYE, *v.* A. F. 517. may perhaps mean—To cloy; to embarrass with superfluity.

ACOIE, *v.* FR. To make quiet. R. 3564.

ACOMBERD, *part. pa.* FR. Encumbered. 510.

ACROKE, *adj.* FR. Crooked, aukward C. L. 378.

ADAWE, *v.* SAX. To awake. 10274. T iii. 1126.

ADO, *v.* SAX. To do. It is used to express the FR. *à faire*. *To have* ADO. R. 3036. To have to do. *And don all that they hun* ADO. R. 5060. *Et facent ce qu'ils doivent* FAIRE. Orig. 4801.

ADON (corruption of OF-DON), *part. pa.* SAX. Done away. L. W. 2582.

ADON, *pr. n.* Adonis. 2226.

ADOUN, *adv.* SAX. Downward. 2417.—Below. 17054.

ADRAD, ADRADDE, *part. pa.* of ADREDE, *v.* SAX. Afraid, 607, 3425.

ADRIANE for ARIADNE, *pr. n.* 4487.

ADVERTENCE, *n.* FR. Attention, T. iv. 698.

ADVOCACIES, *n. pl.* FR. Law-suits, T. ii. 1469.

ADVOCAS, *n. pl.* FR. Lawyers, advocates. 12225.

AFERED, AFERDE, *part. pa.* SAX. Afraid, frightened. 12218. T. ii. 606.

AFFECTE, *n.* LAT. Affection. R. 5486. T. iii. 1307.

AFFERMED, *part. pa.* FR. Confirmed. 2351. L. W. 790.

AFFIE, *v.* FR. To trust. R. 3155.

AFFRAY, *v.* FR. To affright. 8331.

——— *n.* FR. Disturbance, 5557.—Fear. R. 4397.

AFFRIKAN, *pr. n.* The elder *Scipio Africanus*. A. F. 41.

AFILE, *v.* FR. To file, polish, 714.

AFOREN, AFORNE, AFORE, *adv. et prep.* SAX. Æt-ꝑopan. Before.

AGAIN, *prep.* SAX. On-ȝean. Against. 2453. 10456. Toward. 4811. 5419.—*adv.* 993. 10456.

AGAST, for AGASTED, *part. pa.* Terrified. 2343.

AGASTE, *v.* SAX. To terrifie. 1509.

AGATHON, *pr. n.* L. W. 526. I have nothing to say concerning this writer, except that one of the same name is quoted in the Prol. to the *Tragedie of Cambises*, by Thomas Preston. There is no ground for supposing, with Gloss. *Ur.* that *a philosopher of Samos* is meant, or any of the Agathoes of antiquity.

AGEINS, *prep.* 12667, as AGAIN.

AGEN, *adv.* 803, as AGAIN.

AGILTE, *v.* SAX. To offend, to sin against. P. 171, col. 1, l. 57.

——— for AGILTED, *pa. t.* Sinned. 5674.

AGO, AGON, for YGON, *part. pa.* SAX. Gone; past. 2338. 6445.

AGREE, FR. *à gré*. In good part. R. 4349.

AGREFE, *(A'grefe)*. In grief. 14899. T. iii. 864.

AGREGE, *v.* FR. To aggravate. M. 107, col. 2, l. 46.

AGREVED, *part. pa.* FR. Injured, agrieved. 4197. L. W. 345.

AGRISE, *v.* SAX. To shudder. 5034.—To make to shudder. 7231.

AGROSE, *pa. t.* Shuddered, trembled. T. ii. 930. L. W. 830.

AGROTED, *part. pa.* Cloyed, surfeited. AGROTONE WITH METE OR DRINKE. *Ingurgito.* Prompt. Parv.

AGUILER, *n.* FR. A needle-case. R. 98.

AJUST, *v.* FR. To applie. Bo. ii. pr. 3.

AKEHORNS, *n. pl.* SAX. Acorns. Bo. i. m. 6.

AKNOWE, *part. pa.* SAX. *To ben aknowe.* C. L. 1199. To confess. *I am aknowe.* Bo. iv. pr. 4. I acknowledge.

AL, ALLE, *adj.* SAX. All. *Al and som.* 5673, 11910. The whole thing. *At al.* 8921, 9098. In the whole. *Over all.* 7666, 8924. Through the whole. *In alle manere wise.* 13276. By every kind of means. *At alle rightes.* 2102. With every thing requisite.

ALAIN, *pr. n.* A. F. 316. a poet and divine of the XIIth Century. Beside his *Planctus Naturæ*, or *Plaint of Kinde*, which is here quoted, he wrote another poem in Latin verse, called *Anticlaudianus*, to which our author alludes in F. ii. 478. For the rest of his works see *Fabric. Bibl. Med. Æt.* in v. ALANUS DE INSULIS.

ALDER, ALLER, *gen. ca. pl.* Of all. 801. 825. It is frequently joined in composition with adjectives of the superl. deg. *Alderfirst.* 9492. *Alderlast.* B. K. 504. *Alderlevest.* T. iii. 240. First, Last, Dearest of all.

AL, ALL, *adv.* SAX. generally answers to the LAT. *Omnino. Al alone.* 9200. Quite alone. *Al hol.* 11762. Entire. *Al holly.* 7678. Entirely. *All in one.* C. D. 670. At the same time. *All newe.* 13308. A-new. *Al only.* 13385. T. iv. 1096. Solely, singly. It is sometimes used elliptically for *although*, or *all be it that.* 2266. ALL *tell I not as now his observances.* 2477. ALL *be ye not of o complexion.*

ALARGED, *part. pa.* FR. *Eslargi.* Given largely. C. D. 156.

ALAUNS, *n. pl.* A species of Dog. See the n. on ver. 2150. They were much esteemed in Italy in the XIVth century. *Gualv. de la flamma*, (ap. Murator. Antiq. Med. Æ. t. ii. p. 394.) commends the governors of Milan, *quod equos emissarios equabus magnis commiscuerunt, et procreati sunt in nostro territorio* DESTRARII *nobiles, qui in magno pretio habentur.* Item CANES ALANOS *altæ staturæ et mirabilis fortitudinis nutrire studuerunt.*

ALAYE, *n.* FR. Allay; a mixture of base metal. 9043.

ALBIFICATION, *n.* LAT. A Chemical term for making white. 16273.

ALCALY, *n.* ARAB. A Chemical term for a species of Salt. 16278.

ALCHYMISTRE, *n.* FR. Alchymist. 16672.

ALDRIAN, *pr. n.* A star on the neck of the Lion, SP. 10579.

ALE AND BRED. 13801. This oath of Sire Thopas *on ale and bred* was perhaps intended to ridicule the solemn vows, which were frequently made in the days of Chivalrie to a *Peacock*, a *Pheasant*, or some other *noble bird.* See M. de Sainte Palaye, *Sur l'anc. cheval. Mem. IIIme.* I will add here, from our own history, a most remarkable instance of this strange practice. When Edward I. was setting out upon his last expedition to Scotland in 1306, he knighted his eldest son and several other young noblemen with great solemnity. At the close of the whole (says Matthew of Westminster, p. 454.) *allati sunt in pompaticâ gloria duo* CYGNI *vel* OLORES *ante regem, phalerati retibus aureis vel fistulis deauratis, desiderabile spectaculum intuentibus. Quibus visis, Rex* VOTUM VOVIT DEO CÆLI ET CYGNIS *se proficisci in Scotiam, mortem Johannis Comyn et fidem læsam Scotorum vivus sive mortuus vindicaturus, &c.* This practice is alluded to in "DUNBAR'S WISH, *that the King were Johne Thomsonnis man.*" MS. Maitland. St. 5.

> I wold gif all that ever I have
> To that condition, so God me saif,
> That ye had VOWIT TO THE SWAN
> Ane yeir to be Johne Thomsonnis man.

And so in the *Prol.* to the *Contin. of the Canterb. T.* ver. 452. the Hosteler says—I MAKE A VOWE TO THE PECOCK, *ther shall wake a foule mist.*

ALEGE, *v.* FR. To alleviate. R. 6626.

ALEGEANCE, *n.* FR. Alleviation. C. D. 1668.

ALEIS, *n.* FR. *Alise.* The Lote-tree. R. 1377.

ALEMBIKES, *n. pl.* FR. Vessels for distilling; Stills. 16292.

ALE-STAKE, *n.* SAX. A stake set up before an Ale-house, by way of sign. 12255.

ALEYE, *n.* FR. An alley. 13491.

ALGATES, ALGATE, *adv.* SAX. Always. *Toutesfois.* FR. 7031, 7619.

ALGEZIR, *pr. n.* A city of Spain. 57.

ALIGHT, *v.* SAX. To descend. 8785.

——— *pa. t.* for ALIGHTED. 985, 2191.

ALISANDRE, *pr. n.* Alexandria, a city in Egypt. 51.

ALLEGE, FR. To alledge. 9532.

ALMAGEST, *pr. n.* 5765. The Arabs called the Μεγαλη Συνταξις of Ptolemee *Almagesthi*, or *Almegisthi*, a corruption of Μεγιστη. See D'Herbelot, in v.

ALMANDRES, *n. pl.* FR. Almond-trees. R. 1363.

ALMESSE, *n.* SAX. from the LAT. Gr. *Eleemosyna.* Alms, 7191, P. 171, col. 1, l. 5. ALMESSES, *pl.* P. 171, col. 1, l. 17.

ALNATH, *pr. n.* The first star in the horns of *Aries*, whence the first mansion of the moon takes its name. SP. 11563.

ALONDE, (*A'londe*); On land. L. W. 2164. 2402.

ALONG, *prep.* SAX. On-long, 16398. *Whereon it was along.* By what it was occasioned. T. ii. 1001. *On me is nought along thine evil fare.* Thy ill fare is not occasioned by me.

ALOSED, *part pa.* FR. Praised. R. 2354.

ALOUE, *v.* FR. To allow, to approve. 10988. *His dedes are to* ALOWE *for his hardynesse.* P. L. 281. *Therefore lords* ALOW *him lille, or lysten to his reason.* P. P. 76. b.

ALOWE, *adv.* SAX. Low. C. L. 1201.

ALPES, *n. pl.* Bulfinches. R. 658.

ALS, *conj.* SAX. Also. 4315, 11902.—As. T. v. 367.

AMALGAMING. A Chemical term for mixing of Quicksilver with any metal. 16239.

AMBASSATRIE, *n.* FR. Embassy. 4653.

AMBES AS, 4544. Two Aces, at dice. FR.

AMBLING, *part. pr.* FR. 8264.

AMENDE, *v.* FR. To mend. 3068, 3076.

AMENUSE, *v.* FR. To lessen. P. 154, col. 2, l. 35.

AMEVED, *part. pa.* FR. Moved. 8374.

AMIAS, *pr. n.* The city of Amiens. R. 3826.

AMIDDES, *prep.* SAX. At, or in, the middle. 2011.

AMIS, *adv.* SAX. Ill, badly. 11610, 17197. See MIS.

AMONESTE, *v.* FR. To admonish, to advise. M. 112, col. 2, l. 14. P. 170, col. 2, l. 22.

AMONG, *adv.* SAX. Together; at the same time; at the same place. R. 690, 3881. Du. 298. *Ever among.* R. 3771. Ever at the same time. *Conf. Am.* 114. b.

AMONGES, *prep.* SAX. *Among.* 6534, 9902. See the n. on ver. 761.

AMORETTE, *n.* FR. An amorous woman. R. 4755. *And eke as well by* (r. be) AMORETTES.—*Car aussi bien sont* AMOURETTES. Orig. 4437.

AMORILY, C. L. 1383. is perhaps put by mistake for *Merily.*

AMORTISED, *part. pa.* FR. Killed. P. 151, col. 2, l. 9.

AMORWE, On the morrow. 824, 2491.

AMPHIBOLOGIES, *n. pl.* FR. GR. Ambiguous expressions. T. iv. 1406.

AN, for ON, *prep.* 11161. R. 2270.

ANCILLE, *n.* LAT. A maid-servant. A. B. C. 109.

ANCRE, *n.* FR. Anchor. R. 3780.

AND, *conj.* SAX. If. 768, 10307, 15613, 16714.

ANELACE, *n.* 559. See the note.

ANES, *adv.* for ONES. Once. 4072.

ANHANG, *v.* SAX. To hang up. 12193.

ANIENTISSED, *part. pa.* FR. Reduced to nothing. M. 111, col. 2, l. 59.

ANIGHT, In the night. L. W. 1473.

ANKER, *n.* SAX. An anchorite, or hermite, R. 6348.

ANNUELLER, *n.* 16480. See the note.

ANNUNCIAT, *part. pa.* LAT. Foretold. 14021.

ANOIE, *n.* FR. Hurt, trouble. R. 4404.

——— *v.* To hurt, to trouble. M. 108, col. 1, l. 48.

ANOIFUL, *adj.* Hurtful; unpleasant. M. 108, col. 1, l. 8.

ANTEM, *n.* SAX. Antefn. An anthem. 13590.

ANTICLAUDIAN. F. ii. 478. The title of a Latin poem by *Alanus de Insulis.* See ALAIN.

Antilegius, *pr. n.* Antiochus. Du. 1064.
Antiphonere, *n.* Lat. Gr. A book of Antiphones, or *Anthems*. 13449.
Anvelt, *n.* Sax. An anvil. Du. 1165.
Any, *adj.* Sax. Either; *One of two*. 7115.—It usually signifies *one of many*.
Apaide. *part. pa.* Fr. Paid, satisfied. 1870, 9439.
Apaire, *v.* Fr. See Apeire.
Ape, *n.* Sax. Metaphorically, a fool. 3389, 16781. *The monke put in the mannes hode an ape, And in his wife's eke*. 13370. The monk made a fool of the man, and of his wife too.—*Wis of ape*. 16993. See the note.
Apeire, *v.* Fr. To impair; to detract from. 3149. *Our state it* apeires. P. L. 290.—To be impaired; to go to ruin. T. ii. 329.
Apert, *adj.* Fr. Open. P. 161, col. 1, l. 39. *Prive and apert*. 6996. In private and in publick.
Apies for Opies, *n. pl.* Fr. Opiates. L. W. 2659.
Apparaile, *v.* Fr. To prepare. L. W. 2462.
Apparence, *n.* Fr. An appearance. 11577.
Apperceive, *v.* Fr. To perceive. 8476.
Apperceivings, *n. pl.* Perceptions. 10600.
Appetite, *v.* Fr. To desire, to covet. L. W. 1580.
Appoae, *v.* Fr. To object to; to question. 7179, 15831. It seems to be a corruption of *Oppose*.
Approver, *n.* Fr. An informer. 6925.
Apprentise, *n. pl.* Fr. Apprentices, novices. R. 687.
Aqueintable, *adj.* Fr. Easy to be acquainted with. R. 2213.
Aquite, *v.* Fr. To pay for. 6742.
Arace, *v.* Fr. To draw away by force. 8979.
Arande, *n.* Sax. A message. T. ii. 72.
Araye, *n.* Fr. Order. 8138.—Situation. 6484, 13300.—Clothing. 6509.—Equipage. 8821.
———, *v.* Fr. To dress. 3689.—To dispose. 8837.
Arblasters, *n. pl.* Fr. *Arbalestres*. Engines to cast darts, &c. R. 4196.
Archangel, *n.* R. 915. The herb so called; a dead nettle. *Gloss. Urr.*—In the Orig. it is *Mesange*, the bird which we call a Titmouse.
Archebishop, *n.* Sax. Lat. An Archbishop. 7084.
Archedeken, *n.* Sax. Lat. An Archdeacon. 6884.
Archediacre, *n.* Fr. Archdeacon. C. D. 2136.
Archewives, 9071. Wives of a superior order.
Ardure, *n.* Fr. Burning. P. 168, col. 1, l. 17.
Arede, *v.* Sax. To interpret. Du. 289. See Rede.
Arerage, *n.* Fr. Arrear. 604.
Areise, *v.* Sax. To raise. P. 159, col. 1, l. 23.
Aresone, *v.* Fr. *Arraisonner*. To reason with. R. 6220.
Areste, *n.* Fr. Arrest, constraint. 9158. Delay. L. W. 806.
———, *v.* Fr. To stop. 829.
Arette, *v.* Fr. To impute to. 728. P. 159, col. 1, l. 69.
Argoil, *n.* Fr. Potter's clay. 16281.
Ariete, *pr. n.* Aries, one of the signs in the Zodiac. T. iv. 1592. T. v. 1189.
Aristotle, *pr. n.* 10547. A treatise on *Perspective*, under his name, is mentioned by Vincent of Beauvais, in the xiii. century. *Spec. Histor.* L. iii. c. 84. *Extat etiam liber, qui dicitur* Perspectiva Aristotelis.
Arivage, *n.* Fr. F. i. 223. as *Arivalle*.
Arivaile, *n.* Fr. Arrival. F. 451.
Arke, *n.* Lat. A part of the circumference of a circle. 4422.
Arme, *n.* T. ii. 1650. may perhaps be put for *defence, security*.
Armles, *adj.* Sax. Without an arm. 14209.
Arm-grete, *adj.* Sax. As thick as a man's arm, 2147.
Armipotent, *adj.* Lat. Mighty in arms. 1984.
Armorike, *pr. n.* *Basse Bretagne*, in France, called antiently *Britannia Armorica*. 11041.
Armure, *n.* Fr. Armour. M. 113, col. 1, l. 25.
Arn, *pl. n.* of Are. *v.* Sax. Are. 4706, 8218.
Arnolde of the newe towne, *pr. n.* of a Physician Chemist of the xiii. Century. 16896. See *Fabric. Bibl. Med. Æt.* in. v. Arnaldus Villanovanus.
Aroume, F. ii. 32. seems to signify *At large*. **Arowme or more utter**. *Remote. deprope. seorsum*. Prompt. Parv.
A'row; in a *row*; probably from the Fr. *Rue*. Successively. 6836. R. 7608.
Arsmetrike, *n.* Lat. Arithmetick. 1900. See the note.
Arte, *v.* Lat. To constrain. T. i. 389. C. L. 46.
Artelries, *n. pl.* Fr. Artillerie. M. 113, col. 1, l. 25.
As, *adv.* Sax. Alſ. Al so. *Omnino sic. As fast*. T. v. 1640. Very fast. *As swith*. 5057, 16404. Very quickly; immediately. See the n. on ver. 3172.
Ascaunce. See the n. on ver. 7327.
Ashen, *n. pl.* Sax. Ashes. 1304. T. ii. 539.
Aslake, *v.* Sax. To slacken; to abate. 1762. 3553.
Aspe, *n.* Sax. A sort of poplar. 2923. L. W. 2637.
Aspen, *adj.* Of an asp. 7249.
Aspie, *v.* Fr. To espie. 13521.
Aspre, *adj.* Fr. Rough, sharp. T. iv. 827. Bo. iv. pr. 7.
Asprenesse, *n.* Sharpness. Bo. iv. pr. 4.
Assaut, *n.* Fr. Assault. 991.
Assege, *n.* Fr. Siege. 10620.
Asseth. R. 5600. Sufficient, enough. *Assez*. Orig. P. P. fol. 94. b. *And if it suffice not for* Asseth.
Assise, *n.* Fr. Situation. R. 1238.
Assoile, *v.* Fr. To absolve; to answer. 9528. C. L. 1284. *Assoileth*. imp. m. 2. perf. pl. 9528.
Assomoned, *part. pa.* Summoned. C. L. 170.
Assure, *v.* Fr. To confide. T. i. 681.
Asterte, *v.* Sax. To escape. 1597. 6550.—To release. 6896. *Asterte* for *Asterted. part. pa.* 1594.
Astoned, 8192, **Astoniel**. 11651. *part. pa.* Fr. Confounded, astonished.
Astrelabre, *n.* Fr. Astrolabe. 3200.
Astrologien, *n.* Fr. Astrologer. *Ast.*
Asweved, *part. pa.* Sax. Stupified, as in a dream. F. ii. 41.
Aswoune. In a swoon. 3821, 6. 10788. T. iii. 1098. *Adoun he fell all sodenly* in swoune.
At, **atte**, *prep.* Sax. See the n. on ver. 12542. *At after souper*. 10616, 11531. As soon as supper was finished. *At day*. 13169. At break of day. *At on*. 4195, 8313. Of one mind.
Attake, *v.* Sax. To overtake. 16024.
———, for Ataken. *part. pa.* 6966.
A'thre; In three parts. 2935.
Attamed, *part. pa.* Fr. *Entamé*. Opened; Begun. 14894. —Tasted, felt. C. D. 596.—Disgraced. C. D. 1128.
Attempre, *adj.* Fr. Temperate. 14844. M. 107, col. 1, l. 34.
Attemprely, *adv.* Fr. Temperately. 13192.
Attour, *n.* Fr. Head-dress. R. 3718.
Attry, **Atterly**, *adj.* Sax. Poisonous, pernicious. P. 159, col. 2, l. 9.
A'twinne, 3589. **A'two**, P. 167, col. 1, l. 46. In two, asunder.
Atvzar. See the n. on ver. 4725.
Avale, *v.* Fr. To lower; to let down. 3124.—To fall down. T. iii. 627.
Avance, *v.* Fr. To advance; to profit. 246. T. v. 434.
Avant, *n.* Fr. Boast. 227.
Avantage, *n.* Fr. Advantage. 2449.
Avante, *v.* Fr. To boast. 5985.
Avaunt, *adv.* Fr. Forward. R. 3958, 4790.
Auctoritee, *n.* Lat. A text of Scripture; or of some respectable writer. See the n. on ver. 6858.—and ver. 5583. 6790.
Auctour, *n.* Lat. A writer of credit. 6794.
Avenaunt, *adj.* Fr. Becoming. R. 1263.
Aventaile, *n.* Fr. See n. on ver. 9080.
Aventure, *n.* Fr. Adventure. 846.
Averrois, *pr. n.* 435. Ebn Roschd, an Arabian Physician of the xii. century. See D'Herbelot, in v. Roschd, and the authors mentioned in n. on ver. 433.
Aught, *n.* Sax. Aþiþc. Any thing. T. iii. 468. It is sometimes used as an *adverb*. *If that the childes mother weere* aught *she*. 5454. *Can he* ought *tell a merry tale or twele?* 16065.
Aught, *pa. t.* of Owe. T. iii. 1801. as Ought.
Aught-where, *adv.* Sax. Any where. L. W. 1538.
Augrim, a corruption of *Algorithm*. See n. on ver. 3210.
Avicen, *pr. n.* 434. 12823. Ebn Sina, an Arabian physician of the x. century. See D'Herbelot, in v. Sina, and the authors mentioned in n. on ver. 433.
Avis, *n.* Fr. Advice. 1870. *The king at his* avys *sent messengers thre*. P. L. 285.

Avisand, *part. pr.* Observing. C. D. 1882.
Avise, *v.* Fr. To observe. T. ii. 276. *Aviseth you. imp. m. 2 perf. pl.* Look to yourselves; take care of yourselves. 3185.
Avision, *n.* Fr. Vision. 15120, 9.
Aumble, *n.* Fr. An ambling pace. 13814.
Aumener, *n.* Fr. *Aumoniere.* A purse. R. 2067.
Aumere, *n.* R. 2271. *Aumere* of silke. Bourse *de soy.* Orig. It seems to be a corruption of Aumener.
Auntre, *v.* Fr. Corruption of Aventure. To adventure. 4207.
Auntrous, *adj.* Adventurous. 13837.
Avouterer, **Avoutrer**, *n.* Fr. An adulterer. P. 167, col. 1, l. 7. 6954.
Avouterie, **Avoutrie**, *n.* Adulterie. 6888. 9309.
Avow, *n.* Fr. Vow. 2239. 2419.
Aurora. Du. 1169. The title of a Latin metrical version of several parts of the Bible by *Petrus de Riga*, Canon of Rheims, in the xii. century. Leyser, in his *Hist. Poet. Med. Ævi*, p. 692—736. has given large extracts from this work, and among others the passage which Chaucer seems to have had in his eye. See p. 728.

> Aure Jubal varios ferramenti notat ictus.
> Pondera librat in his. Consona quæque facit.
> Hoc inventa modo prius est ars musica, quamvis
> Pythagoram dicant hanc docuisse prius.

Auter, *n.* Fr. Altar. 2294.
Awaite, *n.* Fr. Watch. 7239. 17098.
Awaiting, *part. pr.* Keeping watch. 7634.
Awaped, *part. pa.* Sax. Confounded, stupified. T. i. 316. L. W. 814.
Awayward, *adv.* Sax. Away. 17211.
Awreke, *v.* Sax. To revenge. 10768. R. 278.
Axe, *v.* Sax. To ask. 3557.
Axing, *n.* Request. 1828.
Ay, *adv.* Sax. Ever. 7406.
Avel, *n.* Fr. Grandfather. 2479.
Ayen, *adv. & prep.* P. 166, col. 1, l. 56. as Again.
Ayenst, *prep.* P. 169, col. 1, l. 15. as Again.
Ayenward, *adv.* Sax. Back. T. iii. 751.

B.

Ba, *v.* 6015, seems to be formed from Basse, *v.* Fr. To kiss.
Bacheler, *n.* Fr. An unmarried man. 9150.—A Knight: 3087. 3465.—One who has taken his first degree in an University. 11438.
Bachelerie, *n.* Fr. Knighthood; 17074. *The Bacheleric.* 8146. The Knights.
Bade, *pa. t.* of Bede. 6706. 7449.
Badder, *comp. d.* of Bad. *adj.* Sax. Worse. 10538.
Bagge, *v.* To swell; to disdain. *Sk.* Rather, perhaps, to squint. Du. 624.
Baggingly, *adv.* R. 292. seems to be the translation of *en lorgnoyant;* squintingly.
Baillie, *n.* Fr. Custody, government. R. 4302. 7574.
Baite, *v.* Sax. To feed; to stop to feed. T. i. 192. C. L. 195.
Balance, *n.* Fr. Doubt, suspense. R. 4667.—*I dare* lay in balance *All that I have.* 16079. I dare *wager* all t. l. h.
Bale, *n.* Sax. Mischief, sorrow. 16949.
Bales, C. L. 80. r. Balais. *pr. n.* Fr. A sort of bastard Ruby.
Balkes, *n. pl.* Sax. The timbers of the roof. 3626.
Balled, *adj.* Smooth as a ball; bald. 198. 3520.
Bandon, *n.* Fr. See Du Cange. in v. Abandons. *To her bandon.* R. 1163. To her disposal. *A son bandon.* Orig.
Bane, *n.* Sax. Destruction. 1099.
Barbe, *n.* A hood, or muffler, which covered the lower part of the face, and the shoulders. T. ii. 110. See Du Cange, in v. Barbuta.
Baren, *pa. t. pl.* of Bere. *v.* Sax. Bore. 723.
Bargaine, *n.* Fr. Contention. R. 2551.
Bargaret, *n.* Fr. *Bergerette.* A sort of song. F. L. 348.
Barme, *n.* Sax. The lap. 10945. 14750. Barme-cloth, 3236. An apron.
Barre, *n.* Fr. A bar of a door. 552.—A stripe. 331.
Barreine, *adj.* Sax. Barren. 8394.
Basilicok, *n.* A Basilisk. P. 166, col. 1, l. 60.
Basse, *n.* Fr. A Kiss. C. L. 797.
Basting, *part. pr.* Sewing slightly. R. 104.
Batailed, *part. pa.* Fr. Embattled. R. 4162.
Bathe for Bothe. 4085. 4189.
——— *v.* Sax. 15273. We should rather say *to bask.*
Baude, *adj.* Fr. Joyous. R. 5674.
Bauderie, **Baudrie**, *n.* Pimping. 1928. T. iii. 398. Keeping a bawdy-house. 6887.
Baudy, *adj.* Dirty. 16103. *With* baudy *cote.* Lydg. Troy. B. ix. f. 36. b.
Bayard, *pr. n.* Fr. Originally, a Bay-horse; a horse in general, 16881. T. i. 218.
Bay-window, C. L. 1058. A large window; probably so called, because it occupied a whole *bay*, i. e. the space between two cross-beams.
Be, *prep.* Sax. By. 2577.
Be for Been, *part. pa.* Sax. 60. 7611. 9245.
Beau semblant, Fr. Fair appearance. C. L. 1085.
Beau sire, Fr. Fair Sir; a mode of address. R. 6053.
Bebledde, *part. pa.* Sax. Covered with blood. 2004.
Beblotte, *v.* Sax. To stain. T. ii. 1027.
Becke, *v.* Fr. To nod. 12330. 17295.
Beclappe, *v.* Sax. To catch. 15477.
Bedaffed, *part. pa.* Sax. Made a fool of. 9067. See Daffe.
Bede, *v.* Sax. To order, to bid.—To offer. 8236. 9658. T. v. 185.—To pray. R. 7374. *To bede his necke.* T. iv. 1165. To offer his neck for execution.
Bedote, *v.* Sax. To make to dote; to deceive. L. W. 1345. See Dote.
Bedrede, *adj.* Sax. Confined to bed. 7351. 9168.
Bedreinte, *part. pa.* Drenched, thoroughly wetted. C. L. 577.
Been, *n. pl.* Sax. Bees. 10518.
Befill for Befell, *pa. t.* of Befall. *v.* Sax. 10007.
Beforen, **Beforne**, *adv. et prep.* Sax. Before.
Begiled, *part. pa.* Fr. Beguiled. 12208.
Begon, *part. pa.* of Bego. *v.* Sax. Gone. *Wel begon.* 6188. R. 5533. In a good way. *Wo begon.* 5338. 11628. Far gone in woe. *Worse begon.* T. v. 1327. In a worse way. *With gold begon.* R. 943. Painted *over* with gold; *à or paintes.* Orig.
Begonne, *part. pa.* of Beginne, *v.* Sax. Begun. 11341.
Behalve, *n.* Sax. Half; side, or part. T. iv. 945.
Beheste, *n.* Sax. Promise. 4461, 2.
Behete, *v.* Sax. To promise. 1856.
Behewe, *part. pa.* Sax. Coloured. T. iii. 216. See Hewe.
Behighte, *v.* Sax. To promise. P. 154, col. 2, l. 42.
——— *part. pa.* Promised. 11100.
Behighten, *pa. t. pl.* Promised. 11639.
Behove, *n.* Sax. Behoof, advantage. R. 1090.
Bejaped, *part. pa.* Sax. Tricked. 19653. Laughed at. T. i. 532.
Beknowe, *v.* Sax. To confess. 1558. 5306.
Bel amy, Fr. Good friend. 12252.
Beleve, *n.* Sax. Belief. *His beleve.* 3456. His creed.
Belle, *adj. fem.* Fr. Fair. T. ii. 288.
Belle chere, Fr. Good cheer. 13339.
Belle chose, Fr. 6029. 6092.
Belle Isaude, F. iii. 707. The fair Isaude; the mistress of Tristan. She is called *Isoude.* L. W. 254.
Belle, *v.* Sax. To roar. F. iii. 713.
Belmarie, *pr. n.* See n. on ver. 57.
Belous, *n.* Sax. Bellows. P. 154, col. 1, l. 8.
Bemes, *n. pl.* Sax. Trumpets. 15404. R. 7605.
Ben, *inf. m.* Sax. To be. 141. 167.
——— *pr. t. pl.* Are. 764. 820. 945.
——— *part. pa.* Been. 361. 465.
Benched, *part. pa.* Furnished with benches. L. W. 204.
Bende, *n.* Fr. A band; or horizontal stripe. R. 1079.
Bending, *n.* Striping; making of bands, or stripes. P. 155, col. 2, l. 30.
Bene, *n.* Sax. A bean. 9728. *And al n'as wurth a bene.* R. G. 497.
Benedicte! Lat. An exclamation, answering to our

Bless us! It was often pronounced as a Trisyllable, *Bencite!* 15399. T. i. 781. iii. 758. 862.

Benigne, *adj.* Fr. Kind. 8973.

Benime, *v.* Sax. To take away. P. 158, col. 2, l. 25.

Benison, *n.* Fr. Benediction. 9239.

Benomen, *part. pa.* of Benime. Taken away. R. 1509.

Bent, *n.* Sax. The bending, or declivity of a hill. 1983.

Berained, *part. pa.* Sax. Rained upon. T. iv. 1172.

Berde, *n.* Sax. Beard. To *make* any one's *berde*; to cheat him. See n. on ver. 4094.

Bere, *n.* Sax. A bear. 2060.

——— *v.* Sax. To bear; to carry. *To bere in*, or *on hand*; To accuse falsely. 5040. 5975. To persuade falsely. 5814, 5962.—*To bere the belle.* T. iii. 199. To carry the prize.

——— *n.* Sax. A bier. 2906.—A pillow-bear. Du. 254.

Bering, *n.* Sax. Behaviour. P. 155, col. 1, l. 40.

Berme, *n.* Sax. Yest. 16281.

Bernard, *pr. n.* 436. a Physician of Montpelier in the xiiith Century. See the authors mentioned in n. on ver. 433.

——— *pr. n.* L. W. 16. St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux in the xiith Century. Our author alludes to a proverbial saying concerning him. *Bernardus ipse non vidit omnia.* See Hoffman, in v.

Berne, *n.* Sax. A barn. 3258.

Besant, *n.* Fr. A piece of gold, so called because first coined at Byzantium, now Constantinople. *St.* R. 1106.

Beseke, *v.* Sax. To beseech. 920.

Beset, **Besette**, *part. pa.* Sax. Placed, employed. 3299. 7534.

Besey, *part. pa.* of **Beseen**, *v.* Sax. Beseen. *Evil besey*, 8841. Ill-beseen; of a bad appearance. *Richely besey*, 8860, of a rich appearance.

Beshet, *part. pa.* Sax. Shut up. R. 4488. T. iii. 603.

Beshrewe, *v.* Sax. To curse. 6426, 7.

Beside, *prep.* Sax. By the side of. 5597. 6002.

Besmotred, *part. pa.* Sax. Smutted. 76.

Bespet, *part. pa.* Sax. Spit upon. P. 152, col. 1, l. 33.

Bestadde, **Bestad**, *part. pa.* Sax. Situated. 5069. It is sometimes used in an ill sense, for *Distressed.* R. 1227.

Beste, *n.* Fr. A beast. 1978.

——— *adj. sup.* Sax. Best. 1808. 11843.

Besy, *adj.* Sax. Busy. 2855.

Bet, **Bette**, *adv. comp.* for **Better**. 7533. 13362.

Betake, *v.* Sax. To give. 3748. To recommend to. 8037.

Betaught, *pa. t.* Recommended to. R. 4438. See the n. on ver. 13852.

Bete, *v.* Sax. To prepare, make ready. *To bete fires.* 2255. 2294. To make fires.—To mend; to heal. *To bete nettes*, 3925. To mend nets. *To bete sorwe*, T. i. 666. To heal sorrow.

——— *v.* Fr. To beat. 4206.

Betecche, *v.* as **Betake**. See the n. on ver. 13852.

Beth, *imp. m. 2 pers. pl.* Sax. Be ye. 7656. 17259.

Betid, **Betidde**, *pa. t. & part.* of **Betide**, *v.* Sax. Happened. 7773. T. ii. 55.

Betoke, *pa. t.* of **Betake**. Recommended. 16009.

Betraised, *part. pa.* Fr. Betrayed. *Thei have* betraised *thee.* P. L. 255.

Betwix, **Betwixen**, *prep.* Sax. Between. 2134.

Bewepe, *v.* Sax. To wepe over. T. i. 763.

Bewrey, **Bewrie**, *v.* Sax. To discover. 5193. 9747. T. ii. 537.

Beye, *v.* Sax. To buy. 16762. See **Abeye**.

Beyete, *part. pa.* Sax. Begotten. T. i. 978.

Bialacoil, *pr. n.* Fr. *Bel-accueil.* Courteous reception. R. 2984. *& al.* The same person is afterwards called *Faire welcoming.* R. 5856.

Bibbed, *part. pa.* Lat. Drunk. 4160.

Bible, *n.* Fr. Any great book, 16325. F. iii. 244.

Biccbal Bones. See the n. on ver. 12590.

Bidde, *v.* as **Bede**. 3641.

Bie, *v.* Sax. To suffer. 5749. See **Abeye**.

Bigine, *pr. n.* Fr. *Beguine.* A nun, of a certain order. R. 6861, 7368. See Du Cange, in v. *Beghinæ.*

Biker, *n.* Sax. A quarrel. L. W. 2650.

Bilder, *n.* Sax. A builder. *The bilder oke.* A. F. 176. The oak used in building.

Bill, *n.* A letter. 9811.

Bimene, *v.* Sax. To bemoan. R. 2667.

Bint, for **Bindeth**. C. M. V. 47, 8.

Birde for **Bride**, *n.* Sax. R. 1014.

Hire chere was simple, as birde *in bour.* i. e. as bride in chamber.

Simple fut comme une espousee. Orig.

Bismare, *n.* Sax. Abusive speech. 3963. *And bold, and abiding,* bismares *to suffer.* P. P. 108. b.

Bit, for **Biddeth**, 187. 10605.

Bitore, *n.* Fr. A bittern. 6554.

Bitrent, *part. pa.* Twisted; carried round. T. iii. 1237. iv. 870. Perhaps from the Sax. Betrýman. *Circumdare.*

Biwopen, *part. pa.* of **Bewepe**. Drowned in tears. T. iv. 916.

Blancmanger, *n.* Fr. 389. seems to have been a very different dish in the time of Chaucer, from that which is now called by the same name. There is a receipt for making it in Ms. *Harl.* n. 4016. One of the ingredients is, "*the brawne of a capon, tesed small.*"

Blandise, *v.* Fr. To flatter. P. 154, col. 2, l. 34.

Blanche fevere, T. i. 917. See Cotgrave, in v. "*Fievres blanches.* The agues wherewith maidens that have the greenesickness are troubled; and hence; *Il a les fievres blanches:* Either he is in love, or sick of wantonness." C. N. 41. *I am so shaken with* the fevers white.

Ble, *n.* Sax. Colour. Magd. 391.

Blee, *pr. n.* 16024. 16952. A forest in Kent. Ur.

Bleine, *n.* Sax. A pustule. R. 553.

Blend, *v.* Sax. To blind, to deceive. T. ii. 1496.

Blent, *pa. t.* of **Blend**. T. v. 1194.

——— *part. pa.* 9967. 16545.

——— *pa. t.* of **Blench**, *v.* Sax. Shrinked, started aside. 1060. And so perhaps it should be understood in ver. 3751. and T. iii. 1352.

Blered, *part. pa.* Sax. In its literal sense is used to describe a particular disorder of the eye, attended with soreness and dimness of sight: and so perhaps it is to be understood in ver. 16198. But more commonly, in Chaucer, a man's *eye* is said to be *blered* metaphorically, when he is any way *imposed upon.* 17201. R. 3912. See also ver. 3863.

Bleve, *v.* Sax. To stay. T. iv. 1357.

Blin, *v.* Sax. To cease. 16639.

Blisse, *v.* Sax. To bless. 8428.

Blive, **Belive**, *adv.* Sax. Quickly. 5973. 7102.

Blosme, *n.* Sax. Blossom. 3324.

——— *v.* To blossom. 9336.

Blosmy, *adj.* Full of blossoms. 9337.

Bob up and down, *pr. n.* of a town in the road to Canterbury. 16951. It is not marked in the common maps.

Boance, *n.* Fr. Boasting. 6151.

Boche, *n.* Fr. *Bosse.* A swelling; a wen or boil. Bo. iii. pr. 4.

Bode, **Boden**, *part. pa.* of **Bede**, *v.* Sax. Bidden, commanded. 6612.

Bode, *pa. t.* of **Bide**, *v.* Sax. Remained. T. v. 29.

——— *n.* Sax. A stay, or delay. An. 120.

——— An omen. A. F. 343.

Bodekin, *n.* Sax. A dagger. 3958.

Boece, *pr. n.* 6750. 15248. Boethius. His most popular work *De consolatione Philosophiæ* was translated by Chaucer certainly before 1381, (See L. W. 425.) and probably much earlier. The reflections on Predestination, in T. iv. 966—1078. of which there is no trace in the *Filostrato*, are almost entirely taken from Bo. v. pr. 3. Several other passages of the same work, which our author has copied, have been pointed out in the notes on ver. 743. 2923.

Boiste, *n.* Fr. A box. 12241.

Boistous, *adj.* Sax. Boisterous; rough. 17160.

Boistously, *adv.* Roughly. 8667.

Bokeler, *n.* Fr. A buckler. 112.

Bokeling, *part. pr.* Fr. Buckling. 2505.

Boket, *n.* Sax. A bucket. 1535.

Bolas, *n.* Bullace; a sort of plumb, or sloe. R. 1377.

Bole Armoniac. 16258. Armenian earth. Fr. Gr.

BOLLEN, *part. pa.* of BOLGE, *v.* SAX. Swollen. B. K. 101.

BOLT, *n.* SAX. An arrow. 3264. *Bolt-upright.* 13246. Straight as an arrow.

BONE, *n.* SAX. A boon, petition. 2671. *He bade hem all a bone.* 9492. He made a request to them all.

BORAS, *n.* FR. Borax. 632. 16258.

BORD, *n.* FR. A border; the side of a ship. 3585. *Over bord.* 5342.

BORDE, *n.* SAX. A table. 52.

BORDEL, *n.* FR. A brothel.—*Bordel-women.* P. 169, col. 2, l. 26. Whores.

BORDELLERS, *n. pl.* Keepers of bawdy-houses. R. 7084.

BOREL, *n.* FR. *Bureau.* Coarse cloth of a brown colour. See Du Cange, in v. BURELLUS. In ver. 5938, it seems to signifie *clothing* in general.

——— *adj.* made of plain, coarse stuff. 11028.—*Borel folk.* 7454, 6. *Borel men.* 13961. Laymen. So in P. P. 50. *Burel clerks* is probably put for *Lay clerks.*

BORWE, *n.* SAX. A pledge. *Hath laid to borwe.* 1624. Hath pledged. *Have here my feith to borwe.* 11546. Have here my faith for a pledge. *Seint John to borwe.* 10910. St. John being my security.

BOSARD, *n.* FR. A buzzard; a species of Hawk, unfit for sporting. R. 4033.

BOSSE, *n.* FR. A protuberance. 3266.

BOST, *n.* SAX. Pride, boasting. 14105.

——— *adv.* Aloud. *He cracked* BOST. 3999. *He spake thise wordes* BOST. P. L. 275.

BOTE, *n.* SAX. Remedy; Help; Profit. 426. 13396.

——— *v.* SAX. To help. P. 155, col. 2, l. 46.

——— *pa. t.* of BITE. *v.* SAX. Bit. 14519. *His sword best* BOTE. P. L. 243.

BOTELES, *adj.* SAX. Bootless; remediless. T. i. 783.

BOTEL, BOTELLE, *n.* FR. Bottle. 7513. 12820.

BOTERFLIE, *n.* SAX. A butterflie. 15280.

BOTHE, *adj.* SAX. Two together. *Our bothe labour.* T. i. 973. The labour of us two together. *Nostrum amborum labor.* In T. iv. 168. Ed. Ca. reads *your bother love,* which might lead one to suspect that *bother* was the ancient genitive case of BOTHE, as *Aller* was of *Alle.* See the Essay, &c. n. 27.

——— *conj.* is generally used to copulate *two* members of a sentence; but sometimes *more.* See ver. 992.

And rent adoun *bothe* wall, and sparre, and rafter.—
And ver. 2300.

To whom *both* heven, and erthe, and see is sene.

So the Greeks sometimes used Αμφότερον.

Od. ε'. 78. Αμφότερον κυδός τε, και αγλαΐη, και οπιωρ.

BOTHUM, *n.* FR. *Bouton.* A bud, particularly of a rose. R. 1721. *et al.*

BOUGERON, *n.* FR. A sodomite. R. 7072.

BOUGHTON UNDER BLEE, *pr. n.* of a town in Kent. 16024.

BOUKE, *n.* SAX. The body. 2748.

BOULTE, *v.* SAX. To sift, to separate the flour of wheat from the bran. 15246.

BOUN, *adj.* SAX. Ready. 11807. *And bade hem all to be* BOWNE. P. P. 10. b.

BOUNTEE, *n.* FR. Goodness. 8033, 10163.

BOURDE, *n.* FR. A jest. 17030.

BOURDE, *v.* FR. To jest. 12712.

BOURDON, *n.* FR. A staff. R. 3401. 4092.

BOURE, *n.* SAX. A house; a chamber. 3367. 13672.

BOWE, *n.* SAX. A bow, 108. *A dogge for the bowe.* 6951. 9888. A dog used in shooting.

BOXE, *n.* A blow. L. W. 1386.

BRACER, *n.* FR. Armour for the arm. 111.

BRADWARDIN, *pr. n.* 15248. Thomas Bradwardine, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1349. His book *De causa Dei,* to which our author alludes, is in print. See Tanner, in v. BRADOWARDINUS.

BRAIDE, *n.* SAX. A start. L. W. 1164. *At a* BRAIDE. R. 1336. *Tantost.* Orig.

——— *v.* SAX. To awake; to start. 4283. 6381. See ABRAIDE. *Out of his wit he braide.* 11339. 14456. He ran out of his senses. In ver. 5257, it signifies *to take off.* See also F. iii. 583.

BRAKET, *n.* BRIT. *Bragod.* A sweet drink made of the wort of ale, honey, and spice. 3961. It is still in use in Wales. Richards, in v. *Bragod.*

BRASIL, *n.* A wood used in dyeing, to give a red colour. 15465.—This passage of Chaucer is a decisive proof, that the Brazil-wood was long known by that name before the discovery of the country so called in America. See *Huetiana,* p. 268. In the inventory of the effects of Henry V. *Rot. Parl.* 2 H. VI. m. 20. is the following article. "II *Graundes peces du Bracile,* pris VI. s. VIII d."

BRATT, *n.* SAX. A coarse mantle. 16349.

BRECH, *n.* SAX. Breeches. 12882.

BREDE, *n.* SAX. Breadth. 1972. *In brede.* T. i. 531. Abroad. In F. iii. 132. it seems to be put for *bride.*

BREME, *adj.* SAX. Furious. 1701. *full scharply and full* BRIM. P. L. 244.

BRENNE, *v.* SAX. To burn. 2333.

BRENT, *pa. t. & part.* Burnt. 2427. 2959.

BRENNINGLY, *adv.* SAX. Hotly. 1566.

BRERES, *n. pl.* FR. Briars. 1534.

BRESTE, *v.* SAX. To burst. 1982. 11071.

BRET-FUL, *adj.* 689. The sense is much more clear than the etymology.

BRIBE, *n.* FR. Properly, what is given to a beggar; *What is given to an extortioner, or cheat.* 6960.

BRIBEN, *inf. m.* FR. To beg. 4415. or perhaps, *To steal.* See *Rot. Parl.* 22 E. IV. n. 30. *Have stolen and* BARED *Signetts* (Cygnets). And so in P. P. 115. b. *a bribour* seems to signifie *a thief;* as *bribors, pilors, and pikcharneis,* are classed together; and still more plainly in Lydg. *Trag.* 152.

Who saveth a *theife,* whan the rope is knet,—
With some false turne the *bribour* will him quite.

See also *Antient Scottish Poems,* p. 171. st. 7. l. 3.

BRIBOURES. 6949. Upon second thoughts, I believe that I was wrong in adopting this word from Ms. C. I. and that we should rather read with other Mss.

"Certain he knew of *briberies* mo."

See the n. on ver. 2469.

BRIDALE, *n.* SAX. A marriage-feast. 4373.

BRIDDES, *n. pl.* SAX. Birds. 10925.

BRIGE, *n.* FR. Contention. M. 118, col. 1, l. 4.

BRIKE, *n.* SAX. Breach; Ruin. 14700.

BRIMME, *adj.* R. 1836. T. iv. 184. as BREME.

BROCAGE, *n.* A treaty by a broker or agent. 3375. R. 6971.

BROCHE, *n.* FR. Seems to have signified originally *the tongue* of a *buckle* or *clasp;* and from thence the *buckle* or *clasp* itself. 3265. 8131. T. v. 1660. But see ver. 160. It probably came by degrees to signifie *any sort of jewel.* BROCHE JUELL. *Monile, armilla.* Prompt. Parv. See NOUCHE.

BROIDED, *part. pa.* FR. Braided; woven. 1051.

BROKKING, *part. pr.* Throbbing; quavering. 3377.

BROMEHOLME, *pr. n.* A priory in Norfolk. 4284. *The roods of Bromholme* is mentioned in P. P. 24.

BRONDE, *n.* FR. A torch. 9651.

BROSTEN, *part. pa.* of BRESTE. 3827.

BROTEL, *adj.* SAX. Brittle. 9155. M. 114, col. 2, l. 45.

BROTELNESSE, *n.* Brittleness. 9155.

BROTHERHED, *n.* SAX. Brotherly affection. 12972.

BROUDED, *part. pa.* FR. *Brodé.* Embroidered. 14367.

BROKEN, *inf. m.* SAX. To brook; enjoy; use. 10182. 15308.

BUCKES HORNE. A buck's horn. 3387. To *blow the buckes horne* is put for *any useless employment.*

BUFFETTE, *n.* FR. A blow. P. 151, col. 2, l. 46.

BUGLE-HORN, *n.* A drinking-vessel made of horn. 11565. Gloss. *Ur.* derives it from *Buculæ cornu.* The Gloss. to *Anc. Scott. Po.* explains *Bowgle* to mean *a Buffalo.* I have been told that in some parts of the North *a Bull* is now called *a Boogle.*

BUMBLE, *v.* SAX. To make a humming noise. In ver. 6554. it is used to describe the noise made by a bittern.

BURDOUN, *n.* FR. *Bourdon.* A humming noise; the bass in musick. 675. 4163.

BURIELS, *n. pl.* SAX. Burying-places. 15654.

BURNED, *part. pa.* FR. Burnished. 1985.

BURNEL THE ASSE. 15318. See the note. The story supposes, that the priest's son, when he was to be ordained,

directed his servant to call him at cock-crowing, and that the cock, whose leg he had formerly broken, having overheard this, purposely refrained from crowing at his usual time; by which artifice the young man was suffered to sleep till the ordination was over.

Burnette, *n.* Fr. *Brunette.* Cloth dyed of a brown colour. R. 226. 4756. See Du Cange in v. Burnetum.

Busk, *n.* Fr. A bush. R. 54. 102.

Butte, But, *adv. & conj.* Sax. But; *Sed.* 4824.—Unless; *Nisi.* 13115. *I n'ere* but *lost. Non essem* nisi *perdita.* 15942. 16069.—Only. 11349. *which that am* but *lorne.*

But, *prep.* Sax. Without. Gloss. *Ur.* I cannot say that I have myself observed this preposition in Chaucer, but I may have overlooked it. The Saxons used it very frequently; and how long the Scottish writers have laid it aside, I am doubtful. It occurs repeatedly in Bp. Douglas. But *spot or falt.* p. 3. l. 53. *Poete* but *pere.* p. 9. l. 19. But *and* ben. p. 123. l. 40. *Without* and *within;* Butan anb binnan; originally, I suppose, Bi utan anb bi innan. *By* and *with* are often synonymous.

Buxome, *adj.* Sax. Obedient; civil. 13107. 13172.

Buxumly, *adv.* Sax. Obediently. 8062.

By, *prep.* Sax. has sometimes the signification of in. *By the morwe.* 16965. In the morning, or day-time. See the note. *By his life.* R. 5955. In his life-time.—It is sometimes used adverbially. *By and by.* 1013. 4141. Near, hard by. By and by. *Sigillatim.* Prompt. Parv. See R. 4581. *These were his wordes* by and by. i. e. *Severally; distinctly.* And so perhaps this phrase should be understood in the passage above quoted.

Byforne. See Beforne.

Byleve, *v.* Sax. To stay. 10897. T. iii. 694.

Byraft, *part. pa.* of Byreve, *v.* Sax. Bereved; taken away. 1363.

Byword, *n.* Sax. A proverb. T. iv. 769.

C.

Cacche, *v.* To catch. P. 166, col. 1, l. 57.

Cadence, *n.* Fr. F. ii. 114. See the n. on ver. 17354. and *Jun. Etymolog.* in v.

Cairrud, *pr. n.* of a city in Bretagne. 11120.

Caitif, *n. & adj.* Fr. *Chetif.* A wretch; wretched. 1719. 1948.

Calcination, *n.* Fr. A chemical process, by which bodies are reduced to a calx. 16272.

Calculed, *pa. t.* Fr. Calculated. 11596.

Calewris, R. 7093. is probably mis-written. The Orig. has *La poire du* Caillouel. 12468. Cotgrave says, that *Caillouël* is *the name of a very sweet pear.*

Calidone, *pr. n.* 12539. It should be *Lacedomie.* See the n. on ver. 12537.

Caliophia, *pr. n.* F. iii. 182. We should rather read Calypsa, with the two Bodl. MSS. for *Calypso.*

Calle, *n.* Fr. A species of cap. 6600. T. iii. 775.

Camaille, *n.* Fr. A camel. 9072.

Cameline, *n.* Fr. A stuff made of camel's hair. R. 7367.

Camuse, *adj.* Fr. Flat. 3932. 3972.

Can, *v.* Sax. To know. 4467. 5638. See Conne.

Cananee, *adj.* Fr. Cananean. 15527.

Cane, *pr. n.* Cana in Galilee. 5593.

Canel, *n.* Fr. *Canal.* Channel. Du. 943.

Canelle, *n.* Fr. Cinnamon. R. 1370.

Canevas, *n.* Fr. Canvas. 16407.

Canon, 12824. The title of Avicenna's great work. See D'Herbelot, in v. *Canun.*

Cantel, *n.* Sax. A fragment. 3010.

Capel, *n.* Lat. A horse. 17013, 4. *And gave him* Caples *to his carte.* P. P. 109.

Capitaine, *n.* Fr. A captain. 12516.

Capitolie, *n.* Lat. The Capitol at Rome. 14621, 3.

Cappe, *n.* Lat. A cap, or hood. *To set a man's cap.* 588. 3145. To make a fool of him.

Captif, *adj.* Fr. Captive. T. iii. 383.

Cardiacle, *n.* Fr. Gr. A pain about the heart. 12247.

Carectes, *n. pl.* Lat. Gr. Characters. P. P. 61.

Carfe, *pa. t.* of Carve, *v.* Sax. Cut. 14519.

Carle, *n.* Sax. A churl; a hardy country fellow. 547.

Carmes, *n. pl.* Fr. Carmelite Friars. R. 7462.

Carole, *n.* Fr. A sort of dance. 1933.

——— *v.* Fr. To dance. 2204. *In caroling.* 16813. In dancing.

Carpe, *v.* To talk. 476. *By* carping *of tonge;* By speech. P. P. 566.

Carraine, *n.* Fr. A carrion; dead or putrified flesh. 2015. 14542.

Carrike, *n.* Fr. A large ship. 7270.

Carte, *n.* Sax. A chariot. 2024.

Carter, *n.* Sax. A charioteer. 2024.

Cas, *n.* Fr. *Cas.* Chance. 846. *Upon cas.* 3661. T. i. 271. By chance.

—— *n.* Fr. *Casse.* A case; quiver. 2360.

Cassiodore, *pr. n.* M. 111, col. 1, l. 8. Cassiodorus; a Roman Senator and Consul. A. C. 513. Several of his works are extant. See Fabric. *Bibl. Lat.* and *Bibl. Med. Æt.*

Cast, *n.* Sax. A contrivance. 3605. 2470.

Caste, *v.* To throw. T. iii. 712. L. W. 1931.—To contrive. M. 120, col. 1, l. 23.

Casteloione, *pr. n.* Catalonia, in Spain. F. iii. 158.

Casuel, *adj.* Fr. Accidental. T. iv. 419.

Catapuce, *n.* Fr. A species of spurge. 14971.

Catel, *n.* Fr. Goods; valuable things of all sorts. 542. 3977. 4447.

Caterwawed. 5936. *To gon a caterwawed* seems to signify the same *as to go a caterwawing;* or *caterwawling,* as it has been called by later writers.

Caton, *pr. n.* See the n. on ver. 3227.

Caught, *pa. t.* et *part.* of Catch. 8986. 11824.

Cavilatioun, *n.* Fr. Cavil. 7718.

Cecile, Cecilie, *pr. n.* Cecilia. 15664. 15686.

Ceise, R. 7258. Cese. A. F. 481, are misprinted for Seise, *v.* Fr. To seize; to lay hold of.

Celerer, *n.* Lat. *Celerarius.* The officer in a monastery who had the care of the provisions. 13942.

Celle, *n.* Lat. A religious house. 172. It seems to be put for a man's *head.* 13978. See also 1378.

Celsitude, *n.* Fr. Highness. C. L. 611.

Censer, *n.* Fr. An incense-pot. 3340.

Censing, *part. pr.* Fr. Fumigating with incense. 3341.

Centaurie, *pr. n.* of an herb. 14969.

Cercle, *v.* Fr. To surround. R. 1619.

Cercles, *n. pl.* Fr. Circles. 2039.

Cerial, *adj.* Fr. Belonging to the species of oak called *Cerrus.* Lat. *Cerro.* Ital. *Cerre.* Fr. 2292.

Certain, *adj.* Fr. is used sometimes as a substantive. *Of unces a certain.* 16244. *A certain of gold.* 16492. i. e. A certain *number* of ounces; a certain *quantity* of gold.

Certain, Certes, *adv.* Certainly. 3495. 6790.

Ceruse, *n.* Fr. White lead. 632.

Cesed, *part. pa.* for Seised. C. M. 87. is used in a legal sense. *To that he be cesed therewith;* Till that he be possessed thereof; Till he have *seisen* thereof.

Cesse, *v.* Fr. To cease. T. ii. 483.

Chace, *v.* Fr. To chase; to pursue. 8217. 8269.

Chafe, *v.* Fr. To grow warm or angry. P. 161, col. 1, l. 64.

Chaffare, *n.* Sax. Merchandize. 4558. 13215.

——— *v.* Sax. To merchandize. 4559.

Chaiere, *n.* Fr. A chair. 14531. The chair, or pulpit, of a professor or preacher. 7100.

Chalons, 4138. See the note.

Chamberere, *n.* Fr. A chamber-maid. 5882. 8695.

Champartie, *n.* Fr. A share of land; *A partnership in power.* 1951. Lydgate has the same expression. *Trag.* 139. B. viii. 17.

Chantepleure, *n.* Fr. A sort of proverbial expression for *singing and weeping* successively. An. 323. See Lydg. *Trag.* St. the last; where he says that his book is

"Lyke *Chantepleure,* now singing now weping."

In MS. *Harl.* 4333. is a Ballad, which turns upon this expression. It begins; *Moult vaut mieux* pleure chante *que ne fait* chante pleure.

Chanterie, *n.* Fr. An endowment for the payment of a priest, to sing mass agreeably to the appointment of the founder. 512. There were thirty-five of these Chanteries

established at St. Paul's, which were served by fifty-four Priests. *Dugd. Hist.* pref. p. 41.

CHAPMAN, *n.* SAX. A merchant or trader. 13184, 6.

CHAPMANHEDE, *n.* SAX. The condition of a chapman or tradesman. 13169.

CHAR, *n.* FR. A chariot. 2140. 14366.

CHARBOUCLE, *n.* FR. A carbuncle. 13800.

CHARGE, *n.* FR. A load, burthen; business of weight. *It w'ere no charge.* 2289. It were no harm. *Of which there is no charge.* 10673. From which there is no consequence to be expected. *Of that no charge.* 16217. No matter for that.

——— *v.* FR. To weigh, to incline on account of weight. F. ii. 237.—*Which chargeth not to say.* T. iii. 1582. Which it is of no importance to say.

CHARGRANT, *particip. pr.* Burthensome. M. 111, col. 2, l. 49. P. 162, col. 1. l. 56.

CHARMERESSE, *n.* FR. An enchantress. F. iii. 171.

CHASTELAINE, *n.* FR. The wife of a *Chastelain*, or lord of a castle, R. 3740.

CHASTIE, *v.* FR. To chastise. R. 6993.

CHAUNTECLERE, *pr. n.* of a cock. 14855.

CHEKERE, *n.* FR. A chess-board. Du. 660.

CHEES, *pa. t.* of CHESE, *v.* SAX. Chose. 9471. 10039.

CHEFFIS. R. 7091. We should read *Cheses.* The Orig. has *fromages.*

CHEKE. Du. 659. A term at chess, to give notice to the opposite party, that his king, if not removed, or guarded by the interposition of some other piece, will be made prisoner. It is derived originally from the Persian *Shâh*, i. e. *King;* and means, *Take care of your king.* See Hyde, *Hist. Shahilud.* p. 3, 4.

CHEKKELATOUN, 13664. See the note.

CHEKKEMATE, or simply MATE, is a term used at chess, when the king is actually made prisoner, and the game consequently finished. The Persian phrase is *Shâh mât*, i. e. *The King is conquered.* T. ii. 754. Du. 659. 660. See Hyde, *Hist. Shahilud*, p. 152.

CHELAUNDRE, *n.* FR. A goldfinch. R. 81.

CHEPE, *v.* SAX. To cheapen; to buy. 5850.

——— *n.* Cheapness. 6105. F. iii. 884.

——— *pr. n.* Cheapside in London. 756. 4375.

CHERCHE, *n.* SAX. A church. 2762.

CHERE, *n.* FR. Countenance; appearance. 8114. 8117.—Entertainment; good cheer. 13257.

CHERICE, *v.* FR. To cherish. 14438.

CHERISANCE, *n.* FR. Comfort. R. 3337.

CHERL, *n.* SAX. A man of mean birth and condition. 6740. 7764.

CHERLISH, *adj.* Illiberal. 11827.

CHES, *n.* FR. The game of chess. 11212.

CHESE, *v.* SAX. To choose. 6480. 11398.

——— for CHESETH. 6497.

CHESTE, *n.* LAT. A coffin. 7905.

——— *n.* Debate. P. 158, col 2, l. 57.

CHESTEINE, *n.* FR. The chesnut tree. 2924.—The chesnut fruit. R. 1375.

CHEVACHIE, *n.* FR. An expedition. See the n. on ver. 85. and ver. 16999.

CHEVALRIE, *n.* FR. Knighthood; the manners, exercises, and valiant exploits, of a knight. 45. 2108. 2186.

CHEVALROUS, *adj.* Valiant. T. v. 802.

CHEVE, *v.* FR. To come to an agreement, or conclusion. *Yvel mote he* CHEVE. 16693. Ill may he end. See ver. 4172. *Ye, they shal have the flour of* YVEL ENDING.

CHEVESAILE, *n.* FR. A necklace. R. 1082. The word does not occur in the Orig. in this place, but it is used in ver. 21897.

Et pour tenir la CHEVESSAILLE
Deux fermeaux d'or au col luy baille.

CHEVETAIN, *n.* FR. Chieftain. 2557.

CHEVISANCE, *n.* FR. An agreement for borrowing of money. 13259. 13277. 13321.

CHICHE, *adj.* FR. Niggardly, sparing. R. 5588.

CHICHEVACHE. See the n. on ver. 9064.

CHIDERESSE, *n.* SAX. A female scold. R. 4266.

CHIDESTER, *n.* SAX. A female scold. 9409.

CHIERTER. FR. Tenderness; affection. 5978. 13266.

CHIKE, *n.* SAX. A chicken. R. 541.

CHIMBE, *n.* SAX. The prominent part of the staves beyond the head of a barrel. 3693.

CHIMBE, *v.* To sound in consonance, like bells. 3694

CHIMENEY, *n.* FR. A chimney. T. iii. 1147.

CHINCHE, *adj.* as CHICHE. R. 5998. *Conf. Am.* 109. b.

CHINCHERIE, *n.* Niggardliness. M. 116, col. 2, l. 63.

CHIRCHE, *n.* SAX. A church. 12263.

CHIRCHEREVE, *n.* SAX. A church-warden. 6899.

CHIRCHHAWE, *n.* SAX. A church-yard. P. 169, col. 1, l. 54.

CHIRK, *v.* SAX. To chirp, as a sparrow. 7386.

CHIRKING, *n.* A disagreeable sound. 2006. F. iii. 853.

CHIT for CHIDETH. 16369.

CHIVACHES, *n.* as CHEVACHIE. 16999.

CHIVER, *v.* SAX. To shiver. R. 1732. B. K. 231.

CIERGES, *n. pl.* FR. Wax-tapers. R. 6948.

CIPIOUN, *pr. n.* Scipio. R. 10.

CIPRIS, *pr. n.* Venus. F. ii. 10.

CIRCES, *pr. n.* for CIRCE, 1946.

CITES, *n.* FR. A city. 941.

CITOLE, *n.* FR. A musical instrument. 1961. Sir John Hawkins, in his very curious *History of Musick*, v. 2. p. 106. n. supposes it to have been a sort of *Dulcimer*, and that the name is a corruption of the LAT. *Cestella.* Beside the passage which he has quoted from Gower, *Conf. Am.* 178. it is mentioned again in fol. 189. among the instruments *which sowned lowe.* See also Du Cange, in v. CITOLA, and M. de la Ravaliere, *Poésies du Roy de Navarre.* T. i. p. 248.

CITRIN, *adj.* FR. Of a pale yellow, or citron-colour. 2169.

CITRINATION, *n.* A chemical term. Arnoldus in Rosario MS. l. i. c. 5. *Citrinacio nihil aliud est quam completa albedinis digestio, nec albedo est aliud quam nigredinis ablatio.* Gloss. Carpent. in v.

CLAMBEN, *pa. t. pl.* of CLIMB, *v.* SAX. F. iii. 1061.

CLAPERS, *n. pl.* FR. Rabbet-burrows. R. 1405.

CLAPPE, *v.* SAX. To knock repeatedly. 7163, 6.—To talk fast. 9076.

CLAPPETH, *imp. m.* 2 *pers. pl.* 9076.

CLAPPING, *n.* Noisy talking. 8875.

CLAPSED. Clasped. 275.

CLARRE, *n.* FR. Wine mixed with honey and spices, and afterwards strained till it is *clear.* 1473. 9717. It was otherwise called *Piment;* as appears from the title of the following receipt, in the *Medulla Cirurgiæ Rolandi.* MS. *Bod.* 761. fol. 86. "*Claretum* bonum, sive *pigmentum.* —Accipe *nucem moschatam, carioflos, gingebas, macis, cinamomum, galangum;* quæ omnia in pulverem redacta distempera *cum bono vino cum tertiâ parte mellis:* post *cola per sacculum*, et da ad bibendum. Et nota, quod illud idem potest fieri *de cerevisid.*" And so in R. 5967. *Clarré* is the translation of *Piment.* Orig. 11453.

CLATTEREDEN, *pa. t. pl.* of CLATTER, *v.* SAX. 2425.

CLAUDIAN, *pr. n.* His poem *De raptu Proserpinæ* is alluded to in v. 10106. See also F. i. 449. iii. 419.

CLAUSE, *n.* FR. An end, or conclusion. T. ii. 728.

CLAW, *v.* SAX. To stroke. T. iv. 728. *He* CLAWED *him on the back.* 4324. He stroked him on the back, to encourage him. *To claw on the gall,* 6522. signifies the same as *To rub on a sore place.*

CLED for CLAD. T. iii. 1527.

CLENENESSE, *n.* SAX. Purity. 7465. 7492.

CLEPE, *v.* SAX. To call. 3432.—To name. 4611.

CLERGIE, *n.* FR. The clerical profession. 6859.

CLERGIAL, *adj.* Learned. 16220.

CLERGION, *n.* A young clerk. 13433.

CLERK, *n.* FR. A person in holy orders. P. 169, col. 1, l. 44. —A man of learning. 482.—A student at the university. 3199. 6109. THE CLERK OF OXENFORDE. See his CHARACTER, ver. 287—310.

CLEVES, *n. pl.* SAX. Rocks. L. W. 1468. See CLIFFE.

CLIFFE, *n.* SAX. A rock. L. W. 1495.

CLIFTE, *n.* SAX. A cleft. 7727.

CLIKET, *n.* FR. A key. 9991, 5, 7.

CLINKE, *v.* FR. To ring. 12926.

——— *v. neut.* To tinkle. 12598.

CLIPPE, *v.* SAX. To cut *hair.* 3324.—To embrace. 10367.

CLIPSY, *adj.* As if eclipsed. R. 5349.

Clobbed, *adj.* Sax. Like a club. 13904.
Cloistre, *n.* Fr. A cloister. 7681.—An inclosure. 15511.
Clomben, *pa. t. pl.* of Climb, *v.* Sax. 3636.
Closer, *n.* Fr. An inclosure. R. 4069.
Clote-lefe. A leaf of the bur-dock, or clote-bur. 16045.
Clotered, *part. pa.* Sax. Clotted. 2747.
Clove-gilofre. See the note on ver. 13692.
Cloutes, *n. pl.* Sax. Small pieces. 9827.
Clum, 3639. This word seems to be formed from the Sax. *v.* Clumian. *Mussitare, murmurare;* to express the mumbling noise, which is made by a congregation in accompanying prayers, which they cannot perfectly repeat.
Coagulat, *part. pa.* Lat. Curdled. 16279.
Cockes bones. 16958. 17340. A corruption of a familiar oath, which appears undisguised in ver. 12629.
Cod, *n.* Sax. A bag. 12468.
Cofre, *n.* Fr. A chest. 300. 8461.
Cogge, *n.* Sax. A cock-boat. L. W. 1479. See Du Cange, in v. Cogo.
Coilons, *n. pl.* Fr. Testicles. 12886.
Coine, *n.* Fr. A piece of money. 9044.
——— A quince. R. 1373.
Coint, *adj.* Fr. Neat; trim. C. D. 1824.
Coke, *n.* Lat. A cook. See his Character, ver. 381, 9.
Cokeney. See the n. on ver. 4206.
Cokewold, *n.* A cuckold. How this word has been formed is difficult to say, but probably it has some relation to the Fr. *Cocu.* In the best MSS. of the Canterbury Tales it is constantly spelled as above; and is always, I believe, to be pronounced as a *trisyllable.* See ver. 3154. 3246. 6796. 7198. 10130. 12316. The author of the *Remedie of Love*, ver. 288. seq. pretends, that the *true orthographie* of this word is *cokcold*, according to a most absurd *etymologie*, which he has there given of it; an additional proof, if any were wanted, that the *Remedie of Love* was not written by Chaucer.
Col. See the n. on ver. 15221.
Cold, *v.* Sax. To grow cold. 5299.
Coler, *n.* Fr. A collar. 3239. T. V. 1659.
Colered, *part. pa.* Collared; wearing collars. 2154.
Collation, *n.* Fr. A conference. 8201.
Collinges, *n. pl.* Fr. Embraces round the neck. T. L. ii. 340.
Coltish, *adj.* Sax. Playful as a colt. 9721.
Columbine, *adj.* Lat. Belonging to a dove; dovelike. 10015.
Combre-world, *n.* An incumbrance to the world. T. iv. 279.
Combust, *adj.* Lat. Burnt. 16279. A term in astrology, when a planet is not more than 8° 30′ distant from the sun. T. iii. 718.
Come for Cometh, 15710.
Commensal, *n.* Fr. A companion at table. T. L. i. 319.
Commune, *n.* Fr. Commonalty. 7946.
Communes, *n. pl.* Commoners; common people. 2511.
Compaignable, *adj.* Fr. Sociable. 12934.
Compane for Compagne. 3709. See the note.
Compas, *n.* Fr. A compass; a circle. *The trine compas.* 15513. The Trinity; an appellation borrowed, as it seems, from the common emblem of that mystery, a circle circumscribing a triangle.—Contrivance. F. i. 461. iii. 80.
Compasment, *n.* L. W. 1414. } Contrivance.
Compassing, *n.* 1998. }
Compass, *v.* To contrive. L. W. 1412. *He* compassed *his thought.* 5011. He contrived in his thought.
Compenable, *adj.* Fr. 14878. as Compaignable.
Compere, *n.* Fr. A gossip; a near friend. 672. 4417.
Complin, *n.* Fr. *Complie.* Even-song; the last service of the day. P. 154, col. 2, l. 68.—Singing, in general. 4169.
Compowned, *part. pa.* Composed; put together. L. W. 2574. F. ii. 521.
Compte, *n.* Fr. Account. R. 5026.
Concette, *n.* Fr. Conception; apprehension. Bo. iii. pr. 10.
Condescende, *v.* Fr. To yield. 10721.
Condise, *n. pl.* Fr. Conduits. R. 1414.
Confecture, *n.* Fr. Composition. 12796.
Confuse, *adj.* Fr. Confounded. 2232. 15931. *He became so* confuse, *he cometh not loke.* P. P. 47. b.
Conjecte, *v.* Fr. To project. R. 6928.
Conisaunce, *n.* Fr. Understanding. R. 5465.
Conjure, *v.* Fr. To adjure. 13574.
Conne, *v.* Sax. To know; to be able. *I shal not* conne *answere.* M. 118, col. 1, l. 55. I shall not *know how*, or *be able, to* answer. *Thou shalt never*—Con *knowen.* R. 7135. Thou shalt never *be able* to know.—*To conne thank;* to be pleased, or obliged; *Sçavoir gré.* Fr. 1810. 3068. *To conne maugré.* R. 4559. To be displeased; *Sçavoir mal gré.* Orig.
Conseil, *n.* Fr. Counsel. 9237.
Consentant, *part. pr.* Fr. *Consentant of this cursednesse.* 12210. Consenting to t. c.
Conserve, *v.* Fr. To preserve. 15855.
Consistory, *n.* Fr. signifies usually an Ecclesiastical Court; but in v. 12096. 12191. any court of justice.
Constablerie, *n.* Fr. A ward, or division of a castle, under the care of a constable. R. 4218. See Du Cange, in v. Constabularius castri.
Constantine, *pr. n.* See the n. on ver. 9684.
Conteke, *n.* Sax. Contention. 2005. T. V. 1478.
Contenance, *n.* Fr. Appearance; pretence. 4419. 16732.
Contract, *part. pa.* Lat. Contracted. P. 153, col. 2, l. 18.
Contrariaunte, *part. pr.* is used in the *plural* number, according to the French custom. T. L. i. 319. b. Opposing; contradicting.
Contrarie, *v.* Fr. To contradict. 6626.
Contrarious, *adj.* Fr. Opposite. 6280. Perverse. 6362.
Contrary, *n.* Fr. Adversary. 1861.
Contrefete, *v.* Fr. To counterfeit; imitate. 130. 15327.
Controve, *v.* Fr. To invent. R. 4249. 7547.
Contubernial, *adj.* Lat. Familiar. P. 163, col. 2, l. 69.
Contune for Continue. R. 4354. 5205. 5332. This is one of those licences *for the sake of rime*, of which see the n. on v. 8915. Our author seems to have been ashamed of it, as I do not recollect to have met with it in the Canterbury Tales. Lydgate has been less scrupulous. See *Trag.* 2. b. 14. b. 24. b.
Cope, *n.* Fr. *Cape.* A cloak. 13955.
Coppe, *n.* Sax. The top of any thing. 556. F. iii. 76.
Corage, *n.* Fr. Heart. 22.—Inclination. 9130.—Spirit; courage. 1947. 8096.
Corbettes, *n. pl.* Fr. Niches for statues. F. iii. 214.
Cordeth for Accordeth. T. ii. 1043.
Cordewane, *n.* Fr. *Cordouan.* Spanish leather, so called from Cordubа. 13662.
Cordileres, *n. pl.* Fr. *Cordeliers.* An order of Friars, so called from their wearing a cord for a girdle. R. 7461.
Corinne, *pr. n.* An. 21. What author is meant, I cannot say. One can hardly suppose that Chaucer had met with that poem of the antient Corinna, the contemporary of Pindar, which was entitled Ἔρως περὶ Θηβῶν (*Fragm. ex Apollonio Dyscolo*, ap. Maittair. de Dialect. p. 429. l. 4.) nor do I know that any fictitious work upon the War of Thebes has ever been set forth under her name. She is mentioned by Propertius (2 El. 3. v. 21.) and by Statius (Sylv. V. Carm. 3. v. 158.) but neither of them takes notice of her having written on the affairs of Thebes.
Cornewaile, *pr. n.* Cornouaille, in Bretagne. R. 4250.
Corniculere, *n.* Lat. An officer in the Roman Government. 15837. See *Pitisc. Lex. Ant. Rom.* in v. *Cornicularius.*
Cornmuse, *n.* Fr. A bagpipe. F. iii. 128.
Corny, *adj.* Sax. Strong of the corn, or malt. 12249. 12390.
Coroune, *n.* Fr. A crown, or garland. 2292. 15689.
Corps, *n.* Fr. Body. 12238. 13836.
Corpus, *n.* Lat. Body. *Corpus Domini.* 13365. God's body. *Corpus Madrian.* 13898.
Corrige, *v.* Fr. To correct. Bo. iv. pr. 4. pr. 7.
Corrumpable, *adj.* Fr. Corruptible. 3012.
Corrumpe, *v.* Fr. To corrupt. 2748.
Corse, *v.* Sax. To curse. T. iii. 1707.
Corseint, *n.* Fr. A holy body; a Saint. C. D. 940. *The* corsaynt *and the kirke.* P. L. 44.
Corven, *part. pa.* of Carve, *v.* Sax. Cut, 9698.
Cosin, *n.* Fr. A cousin, or kinsman. It is sometimes used *adjectively.* 744. 17139. Allied; related.

COSINAGE, *n.* FR. Kindred. 13339.
COSTAGE, *n.* FR. Cost, expence. 5831. 9002.
COSTEIE, *v.* FR. To go by the coast. B. K. 36.
COSTLEWE, *adj.* Costly. P. 155, col. 2, l. 23.
COSTRELL, *n.* A drinking-vessel. L. W. 2655. See Du Cange, in v. COSTRELLUS.
COTE, *n.* SAX. A cottage. 8274.
—— *n.* FR. A coat. 8789.—COTE-ARMURE; A coat worn over armour; upon which the armorial ensigns of the wearer were usually embroidered. 1018. 2142.
COTIDIEN, *adj.* FR. Daily. It is used as a *substantive* for *A quotidien ague.* R. 2401.
COUCHE, *v.* FR. To lay. 16620.
COUCHED, *part. pa.* Laid. 16668. COUCHED *with perles.* 2163. Laid, or trimmed with pearls.
COUD, COUDE, *pa. t.* of CONNE. Knew; was able. 94, 5. See the Essay, &c. n. 35. It is used as a *participle pa.* P. 171, col. 1, l. 46. So that instead of *always* in the note, I should have said *generally.*
COVEITE, *v.* FR. To covet. R. 6173.
COVENABLE, *adj.* FR. Convenient; suitable. P. 148, col. 1, l. 12.
COVERCHIEFS, *n. pl.* FR. Head-cloaths. 455.
COVERCLE, *n.* FR. A pot-lid. F. ii. 284.
COVERT, *adj.* FR. Secret; covered. R. 6149.
COVINE, *n.* FR. Secret contrivances. 606. R. 3799.
COULPE, *n.* FR. A fault. P. 153, col. 2, l. 23.
COUNT, *v.* FR. To account; to esteem. 4054. 4190.
COUNTERPEISE, *n.* FR. A counterpoise; a weight which balances another. T. iii. 1413.
—— *v.* FR. To counterpoise. F. iii. 660.
COUNTERPLETE, *v.* FR. To plead against. L. W. 476.
COUNTERWAITE, *v.* FR. To watch against. M. 112, col. 2, l. 65.
COUNTOUR, *n.* FR. *Comptoir.* A compting-house. 13143.—*Compteur.* An arithmetician. Du. 435.
—— 361. See the note.
COUNTRETAILLE, *n.* FR. A tally answering exactly to another. Hence echo is said to answer *at the countretaille.* 9066.
COURE, *v.* FR. To sit crouching, like a brooding hen. R. 465.
COURTEPY. See the n. on ver. 292.
COURT-MAN. 9366. A courtier. *Homme de Cour.* FR.
COUTH, COUTHE, *pa. t.* of CONNE. Knew; was able. 392. R. 753.
—— *part. pa.* Known. 14. 8818.
COWARDISE, *n.* FR. Want of courage. *Cowardie,* 2739. R. 2490. As to the etymology of the *adj.* from which this word has been formed, I think the opinion of Twysden and Somner, Gloss. ad X. Script. v. *Fridwite,* much the most probable, who derive it from the BARB. LAT. *Culum vertere;* to turn tail, or run away. See Du Cange, in v. CULVERTA, and CULVERTAGIUM, who rejects the opinion above mentioned, but without suggesting any thing so plausible. *Culvert,* as it is written in the oldest and best French MSS. that I have seen, might easily be corrupted, according to the French mode of pronunciation, into *Couart* and *Couard.*

I have somewhere seen the French language seriously charged with indelicacy for its frequent and wanton use of the word *cul* in composition; nor can the charge be said to be groundless. Beside the numerous instances which will occur to every body, I suspect that this monosyllable makes part of a common and solemn term in our Law, imported originally from France. *Culprist* seems to me to have been a vulgar name for *a prisoner;* a person *taken* by *that part* which is most exposed in running away. Holinshed has expressed the same idea more delicately. Vol. iii. p. 842. *The prentiris were* CAUGHT BY THE BACKS *and had to prison.* And so it is expressed in "*Ancient Scottish Poems,*" p. 182. ver. 15.

Yet deid [death] *sal* TAK HIM BE THE BAK.

COYE, *v.* FR. To quiet, to sooth. T. ii. 801.
CRAFTESMAN, *n.* SAX. A man of skill. 1899.
CRAKE, *v.* FR. To crack. 3999.
—— CRAKEL, *v.* SAX. To quaver hoarsely in singing. 9724. C. N. 119.
CRAMPISH, *v.* FR. To contract violently, as the cramp does. An. 170.
CRATCHING, *n.* SAX. Scratching. 2836.
CRASED, *part. pa.* FR. *Ecrasé.* Broken. 16402.
CRAANCE, *n.* FR. Faith; belief. 5335.
—— *v.* FR. To borrow money. 13213, 33, 96.
CREATE, *part. pa.* LAT. Created. P. 150, col. 2, l. 63.
CRENCLED, *part. pa.* Crincled; circularly formed. L. W. 2010. Perhaps from the ISLAND. Krynge. *Circino, gyro.*
CREPIL, *n.* SAX. A cripple. T. iv. 1458.
CREVASSE, *n.* FR. A chink, or crevice. F. iii. 996.
CRIANDE, *part. pr.* of CRIE, *v.* FR. Crying. R. 3138.
CRIPS. F. iii. 296. as CRISPE.
CRISIPPUS, *pr. n.* 6259. I find the title of a work in Montfaucon, *Bibl.* p. 513. to which Chaucer may possibly allude. *Chrysippi, discipuli Euthymii, in Joannem encomium.*—and again p. 1314. *Chrysippi Presbyteri laudatio S. Joannis Baptistæ.* It is not likely that a Panegyrist on the Baptist might be led by his rage against Herodias to say some harsh things of women in general.
CRISPE, *adj.* LAT. Curled. 5886.
CROCE, *n.* SAX. A cross. 6066.
CROIS, *n.* FR. A cross. 12885.
CROMES, *n. pl.* SAX. Crumbs. 15528.
CROMMED, *part. pa.* SAX. Stuffed, crammed. F. iii. 1039.
CRONE, *n.* SAX. An old woman. 4852. Kronie; *Ovis vetula.* Kilian.
CROPE, CROPEN, *part. pa.* of CREPE, *v.* SAX. Crept. 4257. 11918.
CROPPES, *n. pl.* SAX. The extremities of the shoots of vegetables. 7. *Now in the crop.* 1534. Now at the top. *Croppe and rote.* T. ii. 348. *Root and branch;* the whole of a thing.
CROSSELET, *n.* FR. A crucible. 16585.
CROUCHE, *v.* SAX. To sign with the cross. 9581.
CROUDE, *v.* SAX. To shove together. 4716.
CROUKE, *n.* SAX. An earthen pitcher. 4156.
CROUN, *n.* FR. signifies *Head.* 4039. 4097.
CROUPE, *n.* FR. The ridge of the back. 7141.
CROWES FEET. T. ii. 404. The wrinkles which spread from the outer corners of the eyes. Spenser describes this mark of old age in the same manner, Ecl. 12.

And by mine eie the crow his clawe doth wright.

CROWNED, *part. pa.* Wearing a crown. *Crowned malice.* 10840. Sovereign malice.
CRULL, *adj.* SAX. Curled. 81. 3314.
CUCURBITE, *n.* LAT. A gourd; a vessel, shaped like a gourd, used in distillation. 16262.
CULPONS, *n. pl.* FR. Shreds. 681. Logs. 2869.
CULVER, *n.* SAX. A dove. L. W. 2307.
CUPPE, *n.* FR. A cup. *Withouten cuppe he drank all his penance.* 11254. He took large draughts of grief; he made no use of a cup, but drank out of the pot.
CURATION, *n.* FR. Cure; healing. T. i. 792. Bo. i. pr. 6.
CURE, *n.* FR. Care. *I do no cure.* L. W. 152. I take no care.
CURFEW-TIME, 3645. according to the Conqueror's edict, is said to have been 8 h. P. M. Walsingham, speaking of an event on the 2d of September, 1311. mentions 9 h. as the *hora ignitegii.* It probably varied with the seasons of the year.
CURIOUS, *adj.* FR. Careful. 13156. R. 6578.
CURTEIS, *adj.* FR. Courteous. 99. 6869.
CUSTOMER, *adj.* FR. Accustomed. R. 4936.
CUTTE, CUT. 837. 847. 12727. seq. See the n. on ver. 837.

D.

DAFFE, *n.* SAX. A fool. 4206. *Thou dotest,* DAFFE, *quod she, dull are thy wittes.* P. P. 6. b.
DAGGE, *n.* A slip, or shred. R. 7212.
DAGGED, *part. pa.* Cut into slips. P. 155, col. 2, 44.
DAGGING, *n.* slitting; cutting into slips. P. 156, col. 2, 33.
DAGON, *n.* A slip, or piece. 7333.
DAMASCENE, *pr. n.* The country about Damascus. 14013.
—— *pr. n.* 435. Joannes *Mesue* Damascenus, an Arabian Physician, in the VIIIth and IXth century. See Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* t. xiii. p. 256.

Dame, *n.* Fr. Lat. *Domina.* Mistress, Lady. 7387. 7451. —Mother. 3960.

Dampne, *v.* Fr. To condemn. 5530. 5652.

Dan, *n.* Fr. Lat. *Dominus.* Lord; was a title commonly given to Monks. 12973. 13935, 6. See the n. on ver. 9634. It is also prefixed by Chaucer to the names of other persons of all sorts. *Dan Arcite.* 2893. *Dan Burnell.* 15318. *Dan Caton.* 14977.

Dance, *n.* Fr. *The olde dance.* 470. 12013. The old game. See R. 4300. T. iii. 696. The French have the same phrase. *Elle sçait assez de la vieille danse.* Cotgrave.

Danger, *n.* Fr. A dangerous situation. *In danger.* 665. See the note; and R. 1470.—Coyness; sparingness. R. 1147. T. ii. 384. *With danger.* 6103. Sparingly.

Dangerous, *adj.* Difficult; sparing. 519. 5733.

Dante, *pr. n.* 6708. 14771. L. W. 360. F. i. 450. See the n. on ver. 6710. and Gloss. in v. Lavender.

Dapple-Gray. 13813. The colour which is called in Fr. *Pommelé.* See ver. 618.

Dare, *v.* Sax. To stare. 13033.

Dares, *pr. n.* of a *supposed* Historian of the Trojan war. F. iii. 379. Du. 1070.

Darreine, *v.* Fr. *Desrener.* Lat. *Derationare.* To contest. 1611. 1633.

Dart, *n.* Sax. A spear, or javelin. *The dart is sette up for virginitee.* 5657. There is an allusion to the same custom in Lydg. *Trag.* 26.

> And oft it happeneth, he, that hath best ron,
> Doth not *the spere* like his desert possede.

Dasen, *pr. t. pl.* of **Dase**, *v.* Sax. Grow dim-sighted. 16960.

Daunt, *v.* Fr. To conquer. P. 152, col. 1, l. 10. R. 4764. *That me with love may* daunted *be.* Orig. 4444. *Qui par amours ne soit* domptez.

Dawe, *v.* Sax. To dawn. 1678. 9716.

Dawening, *n.* Sax. Day-break. 14888. L. W. 2183.

Dawes, *n. pl.* for **Dayes**. 11492. The Saxon ȝ is frequently expressed by *w* as well as by *y*.

Daye, *n.* Sax. Day; Time. 9012. *At my day.* 16495. At the day appointed to me. *To graunt him dayes of the remenant.* 11879. To permit him to pay the remainder at certain days, by instalments.

Deaurat, *part. pa.* Lat. Gilded. B. K. 596.

Debate, *v.* Fr. To fight. 13797.

Debonaire, *adj.* Fr. Courteous. M. 118, col. 2, l. 37. Gentle. Bo. i. m. 5.

Decoped, *part. pa.* Fr. Cut down. R. 843.

Decorate, *pr. n.* Decoratus. Bo. iii. pr. 4.

Dede, *v.* Sax. To grow dead. F. ii. 44.

——— *part. pa.* Dead. 7090.

Dedley, *adj.* Sax. Devoted to death. 11352. Bo. v. pr. 6.

Deduit, *n.* Fr. Pleasure. 2179.

Defait, **Defaited**, *part. pa.* Fr. Wasted. T. V. 618.

Defame, *n.* Fr. Infamy. 14467.

——— *v.* Fr. To make infamous. 3149.

Defaute, *n.* Fr. Want. Bo. iii. pr. 3. **Defautes**, *pl.* Defects. 7392.

Defende, *v.* Fr. To forbid. 7416. 16938.—To ransom. R. 7088.

Defence, *n.* Fr. Prohibition. T. iii. 138.

Definisse, *v.* Fr. To define; to make a definition of. Bo. v. pr. 1.

Degree, *n.* Fr. A stair, or set of steps. R. 45.—Rank in life. 9001.

Deiden, *pa. t. pl.* of **Deye**, *v.* Sax. Died. 7483.

Deine for **Deien**, *inf. m.* of **Deye**, *v.* Sax. To die. L. W. 1179.

Deinous, *adj.* Fr. Disdainful. 3930.

Deinter, *n.* Fr. Value; a thing of value. *Hath deintee.* 4559. Values highly. *Told no deintee of.* 5790. Set no value upon. *It was deintee.* 8968. It was a valuable thing. See also T. ii. 164.

Deintyous, *adj.* Choice; valuable. 8141.

Deis, *n.* Fr. See the n. on ver. 372.

Del, *n.* Sax. A part. *Never a del.* 3066. Not a bit. *Every del.* 3369. Every part.

Dele, *v.* Sax. To divide. 7831.

Delibere, *v.* Fr. To deliberate. M. 118, col. 2, l. 12. T. iv. 169.

Delicacie, *n.* Fr. Pleasure. 14597.

Delices, *n. pl.* Fr. Delights. 15471.

Delie, *adj.* Fr. *Delié.* Thin; slender. Bo. i. pr. 1.

Delit, *n.* Fr. Delight. 7457.

Delitable, *adj.* Fr. Delectable. 7938. 8075.

Deliver, *adj.* Fr. Nimble. 84. *Conf. Am.* 177. b.

Deliverly, *adv.* Quickly. 15422.

Deliverness, *n.* Fr. Agility. M. 110, col. 1, l. 66.

Delve, *v.* Sax. To dig. 538.

Deluvy, *n.* Lat. Deluge. Bo. ii. pr. 6.

Demaine, *v.* Fr. To manage. F. ii. 451.

——— *n.* Fr. Management. 14583.

Deme, *v.* Sax. To judge. 1353.

Demoniak, *n.* Fr. One possest by a devil. 7822.

Dent, *n.* Sax. A stroke. F. ii. 26. See **Dint**.

Denwere, *n.* Doubt. *Sk.* This interpretation suits well enough with the only passage in which I have found this word. T. L. i. 323. b. but I should be glad to see some other instance of the use of it.

De par dieux jeo assente. 4459. In God's name I agree.

Depart, *v.* Fr. To part; to distribute. 7796.

Depeint, *part. pa.* Fr. Painted. 12884.

Dequace, *v.* To shake down. q? T. L. ii. 397. b.

Dere, *v.* Sax. To hurt. 1824. 10554. 14007.

——— *adj.* Sax. Dear. 2455.

Derelinge, *n.* Sax. Darling. 3791.

Dereworth, *adj.* Sax. Precious; valued at a high rate. Bo. ii. pr. 1.

Derne, *adj.* Sax. Secret. 3200. 3297.

Derre, *comp.* of **Dere**. Dearer. 1450. T. i. 174.

Des, F. iii. 270. As **Deis**.

Descensorie, *n.* Fr. A vessel used in Chemistry for the extraction of oils *per descensum.* 16260.

Descriven, *inf. m.* Fr. To describe. 10354.

Desirous, *adj.* Fr. Eager. 10337.

Desolat, *part. pa.* Lat. Abandoned; distressed. 6285.

Despite, *n.* Fr. Malicious anger. 949.

Despitous, *adj.* Angry to excess. 6340.

Despitously, *adv.* Angrily. 8411.

Despoile, *v.* Fr. To undress. 8250.

Destreine, *v.* Fr. To vex; to constrain. 1818. 17110.

Destrer, *n.* Fr. A war-horse. Lat. *Dextrarius.* 13841.

Destrie, **Destruie**, *v.* Fr. To destroy. 1332. 17110.—C. D. 1605. *Descried* should be *Destried.*

Determinat, *part. pa.* Lat. Fixed; determined. 7041.

Detteles, *adj.* Free from debt. 584.

Deve, *adj.* Sax. Deaf. 15754.

Devining, *n.* Fr. Divination. 2523.

Devise, *n.* Fr. Direction. 818. R. 1974.

——— *v.* Fr. To direct; to order. 1418. 1497.—To relate. 7486. 7928.—*At point devise.* 3689. *A point devisé.* Fr. With the greatest exactness.

Devoir, *n.* Fr. Duty. 2600. *Wele thei stode and did ther* devere. P. L. 331.

Dey, *n.* See the n. on ver. 14859.

Deye, *v.* Sax. To die. 6967. 7210.

Dyer, *n.* Sax. A Dyer. 364.

Diapred, *part. pa.* Fr. Diversified with flourishes, &c. 2160. R. 934.

Diche, *v.* Sax. To dig; to surround with a ditch. L. W. 708.

Dide for **Diede**. 6547.

——— *pa. t.* of Do. *v.* Sax. 3421. **Diden**, *pa. t. pl.* 7073. 12901.

Die, *v.* Sax. To tinge. R. 1705.

Diete, *n.* Fr. Daily food. 437.

Diffame, *n.* Fr. Bad reputation. 8416. 8606. See **Defame**.

Digestable, *adj.* Lat. Easy to be digested. 439.

Digestives, *n. pl.* Fr. Things to help digestion. 14967.

Dight, *v.* Sax. To dispose. 14447.—To dress. 6349. 17261. See ver. 10235.

Digne, *adj.* Fr. Worthy. 2218. 5198.—Proud; disdainful. 519.

Dike, *v.* Sax. To dig; to make ditches. 538.

Dilatation, *n.* Fr. Enlargement. 4652.

Dint, *n.* Sax. as **Dent**. *Thonder-dint.* 5858. T. V. 1504. A stroke of thunder.

Dioscorides, *pr. n.* of a Greek writer on Plants, whose work is extant. 432.

Disarray, *n.* Fr. Disorder. P. 168, col. 1, l. 62.
Disavaunce, *v.* Fr. To drive back. T. ii. 511.
Disaventure, *n.* Fr. Misfortune. T. iv. 297.
Disblame, *v.* Fr. To clear from blame. T. ii. 17.
Discomfiture, *n.* Fr. Defeat. 1010.
Discomfort, *n.* Fr. Displeasure. 11208.
Discomforten, *v.* Fr. To discourage. 2706.
Discoverte, *adj.* Fr. *At discoverte.* P. 162, col. 2, l. 51. Uncovered. *A descouvert.*
Disdeinous, *adj.* Fr. Disdainful. R. 7412.
Disencrese, *n.* Fr. Diminution. B. K. 203.
——— *v. neut.* Fr. To decrease. Bo. v. pr. 6.
Disfigure, *n.* Fr. Deformity. 6542.
Disherited, *part. pa.* Fr. Disinherited; stripped of possessions. 2928. L. W. 1063.
Dishevele, *part. pa.* Fr. With hair hanging loose. 685. *Deschevelé.*
Disjoint, *n.* Fr. A difficult situation. 2964. 13341.
Disobeisant, *part. pa.* Fr. Disobedient. A. F. 429.
Disordeined, *part. pa.* Fr. Disorderly. P. 165, col. 2, l. 5.
Disordinate, *adj.* Lat. Disorderly. P. 168. col. 1, l. 14.
Disordinaunce, *n.* Fr. Irregularity. F. i. 27.
Disparage, *n.* Fr. A disparagement. 8784.
Dispence, *n.* Fr. Expence. 443. 6845.
Disperance, *n.* Fr. Despair. T. ii. 530.
Dispitous, *adj.* Angry to excess. 518. See Despitous.
Displesance, *n.* Fr. Displeasure. R. 3436.
Dispone, *v.* Lat. To dispose. Bo. iv. pr. 6.
Disport, *n.* Fr. *Deport.* Sport; diversion. 777.
——— *v.* To divert. T. iii. 1139.
Dispreising, *part. pa.* Fr. Undervaluing. M. 116, col. 1, l. 34.
Disputison, *n.* Fr. Dispute. 9348. 11202. *The clergie of the south made a* disputesoun. P. L. 300.
Disrulily, *adv.* Irregularly. R. 4900.
Di-simule, *v.* Fr. To dissemble. 17296.
Dissimulings, *n. pl.* Fr. Dissemblings. 10599.
Dissoned, *part. pa.* Fr. Dissonant. R. 4248.
Distaine, *v.* Fr. To discolour; to take away the colour. T. ii. 840. L. W. 274.
Distinct, *v.* Lat. To distinguish. R. 6199.
Distingued, *part. pa.* Fr. Distinguished. Bo, ii. pr. 5.
Distourbled, *pa. t.* Fr. Disturbed. R. 1713.
Distreyne, *n.* Fr. To constrain. P. 148, col. 2, l. 23. See Destreine.
Distrouble, *v.* Fr. To disturb. P. 148, col. 1, l. 22. Du. 524.
Disturne, *v.* Fr. To turn aside. T. iii. 719.
Dite, *v.* Fr. To dictate; to write. R. 6786.
Dites, *n. pl.* Fr. Sayings, ditties. F. ii. 114.
Ditus, *pr. n.* Dictys Cretensis. F. iii. 379.
Diverse, *adj.* Fr. Different. 4631.
———, *v.* To diversify. T. iii. 1758.
Divine, *n.* for *Divinity.* R. 6488.
Divinistre, *n.* Fr. A divine. 2813.
Do, *v.* Sax. See the Essay, &c. *n.* 37.
— for **Don**, *part. pa.* M. 120, col. 1, l. 34.
Doand, *part. pr.* Doing. R. 2708.
Dogerel, *adj.* derived, I suppose, from *Dog*; so that *Rime dogerel* in ver. 13853. may be understood to mean what in French might be called *Rime de chien.* See Cotgrave, in *v.* Chien. "*Chose de chien;* A paultrie thing; a trifle; trash, trumperie."
Dogge for the Bowe. 6951, 9888. A dog used in shooting.
Doke, *n.* Sax. A duck. 3576.
Dole, *n.* Sax. as Del. R. 2364.
———, *n.* Fr. Grief, mourning. R. 2959.
Dolven, *part. pa.* of Delve, *v.* Sax. Buried. 4070.
Dombe, *adj.* Sax. Dumb. 776.
Dome, *n.* Sax. Judgement, opinion. 10969.
Domesman, *n.* Sax. A judge. 14408.
Donet, *n.* A grammar; the elements of any art; from Ælius Donatus, a Roman Grammarian, whose introduction to the Latin language (*inter Gramm. Vet. Putsch.* p. 1735.) was commonly read in schools. T. L. ii. fol. 338. *Then drave I me among drapers, my* donet *to lerne.* P. P. 23. b.
Donmow, *pr. n.* 5799. See the note; and P. P. 44. b.
Donne, Don. *adj.* Sax. Of a brown or dun colour. T. ii. 908. A. F. 334.
Dormant, *part. pr.* Fr. Fixed; ready. 355. *Les vaisseaux qui là* dormoient *à l'ancre.* Froissart, v. iii. c. 52.
Dortour, *n.* Fr. A dormitory, or common sleeping room. 7437.
Dosein, *n.* Fr. A dozen. 580.
Dosser, *n.* Fr. A basket to be carried on the back. F. iii. 850.
Dote, *v.* Sax. To be foolish, through age or otherwise. 9315. 16451.
Doth, *imp. m. 2 per. pl.* of Do. 6631. Do ye.
Doucid. F. iii. 131. may perhaps be a corruption of *Doucet*, which is the name of a musical instrument, in a poem of Lydgate's. MS. *Bodl.* Fairf. 16.

"*There were trumpes and trumpetes,*
"*Lowde shallys and* doucetes."

Doughtren, *n. pl.* Sax. Daughters. 41835.
Doutance, *n.* Fr. Doubt. T. iv. 963.
Doute, *v.* Fr. To fear. R. 1089.
Doutelees, Douteles, *adv.* Without doubt. 2669. 4511
Doutous, *adj.* Doubtful. T. iv. 992.
D'outre mere. Fr. From beyond sea. Du. 253.
Dowaire, *n.* Fr. Dower. 8724.
Dradde, Drad, *pa. t. & part.* of Drede, *v.* Sax. Feared 15483. 7945.
Draf, *n.* Sax. Things thrown away, as unfit for man's food. 17346.
Draf-sak. 4204. A sack full of draffe.
Drafty, *adj.* Sax. Of no more value than draffe. 13861
Draggis, *n. pl.* Fr. Drugs. 428.
Drede, *n.* Sax. Fear; Doubt. *Withouten drede.* 4449. Without doubt. *Out of drede.* 5313. Out of doubt.
——— *v.* Sax. To fear. 2595. Dred. *pa. t.* 8056. for Drad
Dredeful, *adj.* Timorous. 1481. 11621.
Dredeles, *adv.* Without doubt. T. i. 1035.
Dreint, *pa. t. & part.* of Drenche. Drowned. 11690. 3520.
Drenche, *v.* Sax. To drown. 3617.
——— *v. neut.* Sax. To be drowned. 3521. 5343.
Drerinesse, *n.* Sax. Sorrow. R. 4728.
Drery, *adj.* Sax. Sorrowful. T. i. 13.
Dresse, *v.* Fr. To address; apply. 8883.
Dretche, *v. act.* Sax. To vex; to trouble. T. ii. 1471.
Dretched, *part. pa.* Oppressed; troubled. 14893. *Conf. Am.* 79.
Dretche, *v. neut.* Sax. To delay. T. ii. 1264. iv. 1446. *Conf. Am.* 178.
Dretching, *n.* Delay. T. iii. 855.
Drie, *v.* Sax. To suffer. R. 4390. 7484. T. v. 264. 296.
Drife, *v.* Sax. To drive. R. 1874.
Drinkeles, *adj.* Sax. Without drink. T. ii. 718.
Dronkelew, *adj.* Sax. Given to drink. 7688. 19429. P.P. 41.
Dronken, *part. pa.* of Drink, *v.* Sax. Drunk. 7481.
Drough, *pa. t.* of Draw, *v.* Sax. Drew. T. V. 1557. L. W 1457.
Drovy, *adj.* Sax. Dirty. P. 165, col. 1, l. 63.
Drueric, *n.* Fr. Courtship; gallantry. 1823. R. 844.— A mistress. R. 5064. See Du Cange, in *v.* Drudaria.
The reader may perhaps be not displeased to see the following description of a *Drut*, or *Lover*, by Guillem Aesmar a Provençal poet. MS. Crofts. fol. ccxviii.

Ben paoc ama *drut*, qi non es gelos,
Et paoc ama, qi non est airos,
Et paoc ama, qi non es solettis,
Et paoc ama, qi non fa tracios;
Mais vaut d amor qi ben est enveios
Un dolz plorar non fait qatorze ris.
Qant eu li quier merce en genoillos,
E la mi colpa et mi met ochaisos,
Et l aigua m cur aval per mer lo vis,
Et ela m fai un regard amoros,
Et eu li bais la bucha els ols amdos,
Adonc mi par un ioi de paradis.

Drugge, *v.* Sax. To drag. 1418.
Dubbed, *part. pa.* Sax. Created a knight. P. 164, col. 1, l. 24. The phrase is derived from *the stroke*, with a sword or otherwise, which was always a principal ceremony at the creation of a knight. *At Dubban*, Island signifies *to strike.* This *stroke* in French was called *La colée.* See *L'Ordene de Chevalerie*, par Hue de Tabarie,

ver. 244. seq. published by M. Barbazan. 1759. and Du Cange. in v. ALAPA MILITARIS.

DUETEE, *n.* FR. Duty; what is due to any one. 6934. 6973.

DULLE, *v. act.* SAX. To make dull. 16561.

——— *v. neut.* SAX. To grow dull. R. 4792.

Dun is in the mire. 16954. See *Ray's* Proverbial Similies, p. 219. *As dull as Dun in the mire.* I suppose *Dun* was a nickname given to the Ass, from his colour, as well as *Burnell.* See the n. on ver. 15318.

DURE, *v.* FR. To endure. 1362. 11148.

DURESSE, *n.* FR. Hardship; severity. R. 3547.

DYEKED, *pa. t.* SAX. Grow dark, or dim. 2808.

DUTEE. 3062. as DUETEE.

DWALE, *n.* SAX. A sleeping-potion. 4159. C. L. 998.

DWELLINGS, *n. pl.* SAX. Delays. Bo. i. m. 1. *Moras.* Orig.

DWINED, *part. pa.* SAX. Wasted. R. 360.

E.

EARED, *part. pa.* Ploughed. F. i. 485. See ERE.

EBRAIKE, *adj.* Hebrew. 4909.

ECCLESIAST, *n.* An ecclesiastical person. 710.—The book of Ecclesiastes, or Ecclesiasticus. 6233.

ECHE, *adj.* SAX. Æice. Each one, every one, of any number. 39. 662. 1134.

——— *v.* SAX. To add. F. iii. 975.—To add to; to encrease T. i. 706.

EDIPPE, *pr. n.* Œdipus. T. iv. 300.

EFFECT, *n.* FR. Substance. 7033. 9272.

EFT, *adv.* SAX. Again. 1671. 5212. 10945.

EFTSONE, EFTSONES, *adv.* SAX. Soon after; presently. 3489. 5329. 6390.

EGALITEE, *n.* FR. Equality. P. 169, col. 1, l. 5.

EGRE, EGRE, *adj.* FR. Sharp. P. 148, col. 2, l. 60. R. 217.

EGGE, *v.* SAX. To incite. P. 169, col. 1, l. 68.

EGGEMENT, *n.* SAX. Incitement. 5262.

EGGING, *n.* 10009. as EGGEMENT.

EGRESSOINE, *n.* FR. Agrimony. 16268.

EIRE for AIRE. 3473.

EISEL, *n.* SAX. Vinegar. R. 217. But see Br. Ro. CXIV. *Vynegar aysell other alegar.*—And CXV. *Vynegar other aysell.*

ELAT, *part. pa.* LAT. Elated. 14173.

ELDE, *n.* SAX. Old age. 6797. 10054.

——— *v.* SAX. To make old. R. 391, 2.—*v. neut.* To grow old. R. 395.

ELENGE, *adj.* Strange. 6781. See the note; but I much distrust the etymology there proposed from Gloss. *Ur.* In ver. 13152, it seems to signify *Dull, Chearless;* as in P. P. 111. b. *Hevy-chered I yede, and* ELENGE *in herte.* And so perhaps it should be understood in the passages quoted from C. N. 115. and P. P. 3 b. and 46 b.

ELENGENESSE, *n.* R. 7406. in the Orig. *Soucy;* Care; trouble.

ELFE, *n.* SAX. A witch. 5174.—A faery. 6455.

ELF-QUENE, *n.* Queen of elves or faeries. 6442. 13720, 4.

ELI, *pr. n.* 7472. seems to be put for ELIE. See 1 Kings, c. 19.

ELIE, *pr. n.* Elijah. 7698. The Carmelites pretend that Elijah was the founder of their order.

ELISEE, *pr. n.* Elisha, the disciple of Elijah. 7698.

ELLES, *adv.* SAX. Else. 377. 1153. *Elles what.* F. iii. 651. Any thing else. *Elleswher.* 2115. 13520. Elsewhere.

ELVISH, *adj.* SAX. Faery-like; fantastick. 16219. 16310.—In ver. 13633, it seems to signifie *shy, reserved.*

EMBELIHE, *v.* FR. To beautifie. L. W. 1735.

EMBOLDE, *v.* FR. To make bold. C. L. 1147.

EMBOYSSEMENT, *n.* FR. Ambush. M. 112, col. 2, l. 65.

EMBROUDED, *part. pa.* FR. Embroidered. 89. L. W. 119.

EME, *n.* SAX. Uncle. T. ii. 162.

EMFORTH, *prep.* SAX. Even with. EMFORTH *my might.* 2237. Even with my might; with all my power. EMFORTH *my wit.* T. ii. 243. To the utmost of my understanding. It is a corruption of ȝenforþ, which occurs at length in P. P. 66. b. EVENFORTH *with thyselfe,* and 108. b. *He did equitie for all,* EVENFORTH *his power.*

EMPEIRE, *v.* FR. To impair; hurt. 10072.

EMPERICE, *n.* FR. Empress. 6828. 11360.

EMPLASTRE, *v.* FR. To plaister over. 10171.

EMPLIE, *v.* To infold; to involve. Bo. v. m. 1. *Implicat.* Orig.

EMPOISONER, *n.* FR. A poisoner. 12828.

EMPRESSE, *v. neut.* FR. To crowd. 9452. 16539.

EMPRISE, *n.* FR. Undertaking. 2542.

EMPTE, *v.* SAX. To empty. 16209.

ENBATTELLED, *part. pa.* FR. Indented, like a battlement. 14866.

ENBIBING, *part. pr.* LAT. Imbibing. 16282.

ENBOSED, *part. pa.* FR. *Embosqué.* Sheltered in a wood. Du. 353.

ENBOSSED, *part. pa.* FR. *Embossé.* Raised. L. W. 1198.

ENBRACE, *v.* FR. To take hold of. 8288.

ENBRAUDE, *v.* FR. To embroider. L. W. 2340.

ENCENSE, *n.* FR. Incense. 2279.

——— *v.* FR. To burn incense. 15863. To burn incense to. 15880.

ENCHAUFING, *n.* FR. Heat. P. 168, col. 1, l. 17.

ENCHESON, *n.* FR. Cause; occasion. 10770. M. 116, col. 2, l. 48.

ENCORPORING, *part. pr.* FR. Incorporating. 16283.

ENDELONG, *prep.* SAX. Along. 2680. 11304.—*adv.* Lengthways. 1993.

ENDETTED, *part. pa.* FR. Indebted. 16202.

ENDITE, *v.* FR. To dictate; relate. 2743.

ENDOUTE, *v.* FR. To doubt; to fear. R. 1664.

ENDRIE, *v.* SAX. To suffer. C. L. 727. 941.

ENEE, *pr. n.* Æneas. 4484.

ENEIDOS, *pr. n.* Virgil's Æneis. 15365.

ENFAMINED, *part. pa.* FR. Hungry. L. W. 2418.

ENFECTE, *v.* FR. To infect. 16441.

——— *part. pa.* Infected. C. L. 217.

ENFORCE, *v.* FR. To strengthen. 5022.

ENFORCED, *part. pa.* Constrained by force. P. 169, col. 2, l. 18.

ENFORTUNE, *v.* FR. To endow with a certain fortune. C. M. 106.

ENGENDRURE, *n.* FR. Generation. 5716. 5719.

ENGINED, *part. pa.* FR. Racked; tortured. 15066.

ENGLUTING. 16234. Rather ENLUTING. Stopping with clay.

ENGREGGE, *v.* FR. To aggravate. P. 169, col. 2, l. 32.

ENGREVE, *v.* FR. To hurt. R. 3444.

ENHAUNSE, *v.* FR. To raise. 1436.

ENHAUNSED, *part. pa.* Raised. 9248.

ENHORT, *v.* FR. To exhort. 2853.

ENLACED, *part. pa.* FR. Entangled. Bo. v. pr. 1.

ENLANGOURED, *part. pa.* FR. Faded with languor. R. 7399.

ENLEVEN, *num.* SAX. Eleven. 17317.

ENLUMINE, *v.* FR. To illuminate. 7909.

ENOINT, *part. pa.* FR. Anointed. 2963.

ENSELED, *part. pa.* FR. Sealed up; kept secret. T. v. 151.

ENSPIRE, *v.* FR. To inspire. 6.

ENSURE, *v.* FR. To assure. 12077. 12971.

ENTAILE, *n.* FR. Shape. R. 162. 3711.

ENTAILED, *part. pa.* FR. Carved. R. 140.

ENTALENTE, *v.* FR. To excite. Bo. v. pr. 5.

ENTEND, *v.* FR. To attend. 5857. 11001.

ENTENDEMENT, *n.* FR. Understanding. T. iv. 1696.

ENTENTE, *n.* FR. Intention. 1489.

ENTENTIF, *adj.* FR. Attentive. 9165.

ENTERCHANGEDEN, *pa. t. pl.* FR. Exchanged. T. iii. 1374.

ENTERMEDLED, *part. pa.* FR. Intermixed. R. 906.

ENTERMETE, *v.* FR. To interpose. 6416. R. 2966.

ENTERPART, *v.* FR. To share. T. i. 503.

ENTETCHED, *part. pa.* FR. *Entaché.* It is applied indifferently to things and persons *marked,* or *endowed,* with good or bad qualities. *Entetched and defouled with yvel.* Bo. iv. pr. 3. Stained and defiled with evil.—*The best entetched.* T. v. 832. Endowed with the best qualities.

ENTREE, *n.* FR. Entry. 1965.

ENTREMETS, *n. pl.* FR. "Choice dishes served in between the courses at a feast. *Cotg.*" R. 6831.

ENTRIKE, *v.* FR. To deceive. R. 1642.

——— To intangle. A. F. 403.

ENTUNED, *part. pa.* FR. Tuned. 123.

ENTUNES, *n. pl.* FR. Songs; tunes. Du. 369.

ENVENIME, *v.* FR. To poison. 6056.

ENVENIMING, *n.* Poisoning. 9934.

ENVIE, *v.* FR. To vie; to contend. 5724. Du. 406.

ENVIRON, *adv.* FR. About. C. L. 1031. *Conf. Am.* 139. b.
——— *v.* FR. To surround. R. 7067.
ENVOLUPED, *part. pa.* FR. Wrapt up. 12876.
ENVYNED. See the n. on ver. 344.
Epistolis, LAT. Epistles. 4475.
EQUIPOLENCES, *n. pl.* FR. Equivalents. R. 7126.
ER, *adv.* SAX. Before. 3787.—Before that. 4193. 2639.
ERANDE, *n.* SAX. A message; an errand. Du. 134.
ERE, *v.* FR. To plough. 888.
EREOS for EROS, *pr. n.* GR. Love. 1376.
ERKE, *adj.* SAX. Weary; sick. R. 4867.
ERLY, *adv.* SAX. Early. 811. 2491.
ERME, *v.* SAX. To grieve. 12246.
ERMEFUL. See the n. on ver. 12236.
ERMIN, *adj.* Armenian. 14344.
ERNEST, *n.* SAX. Zeal; studious pursuit of any thing. L. W. 1285.
ERNESTFUL, *adj.* Serious. 9051. T. ii. 1727.
ERRATIKE, *adj.* FR. Wandering; applied to *the Planets*. T. v. 1811.
ERRAUNT, *part. pr.* FR. Strolling; applied to *a thief*. 17173
ERS, ERSE, *n.* SAX. The fundament. 3732. 7272.
ERST, *adv. superl.* of ER. First. 778. *At erst.* At first; for the first time. 8861. 15732. 13624.—It is sometimes redundant. *Long erst or.* 12596. Long before.
ERTHELES, *adj.* SAX. Without earth. T. iv. 770.
ESCHAUNGE, *n.* FR. Exchange. T. iv. 146.
ESCHEVE, ESCHUE, *v.* FR. To shun; to decline. 9686. C. N. 114.
ESCULAPIUS, *pr. n.* 431. A book of Medicine, *under his name*, is mentioned by Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* t. i. p. 56. n. *.
ESE, *n.* FR. Pleasure. 5709.
——— *v.* To accommodate. 2196.
ESED, *part. pa.* 2672. See the n. on ver. 29.
ESEMENT, *n.* Relief. 4177. 4184.
ESIE, *adj.* Gentle; light. *Esie sighes.* T. iii. 1369. which passage Lord Surry has copied. *Songes*, &c. p. 12. "And *easy sighes*, such as folkes draw in love."
ESIER, *comp. d.* Lighter. *Of esier avail.* C. L. 116. Of lighter, or less value.
ESILICH, *adv.* Gently. T. i. 317.
ESPERUS, *pr. n.* Hesperus; a name of the Planet Venus. B. K. 613.
ESPIAILLE, *n.* FR. Spying; private watching. 6905. M. 112, col. 2, l. 65.
ESPIRITUELL, *adj.* FR. Spiritual; heavenly. R. 650. 672.
ESSOINE, *n.* FR. A legal excuse. P. 149, col. 2, l. 45.
ESTAT, ESTATE, *n.* FR. State; condition. 203. 524.—Administration of government. 7600.
ESTATELICH, *adj.* Stately. 140.
ESTRES, *n. pl.* FR. The inward parts of a building. 1973. 4293. R. de la R. 13267. *Car il sçet de l' Hostel les estres.*
ETERNE, *adj.* LAT. Everlasting. 1306.
ETHE, *adj.* SAX. Easy. R. 3955. T. v. 850.
EVANGILES, *n. pl.* FR. Gospels. 5066.
EVEN, *adj.* SAX. Equal. An *even-cristen*. P. 155, col. 1, l. 30. 159, col. 2, l. 57. A fellow-christian.
EVENLIKE, *adj.* SAX. Equal. Bo. iv. m. 6.
——— *adv.* Equally. Bo. iv. pr. 2.
EVER, *adj.* SAX. Always. *Ever in on.* 1773. 3878. Continually in the same manner. *Ever lenger the more.* 10718. 11772. See P. 170, col. 1, l. 30. where this elliptical phrase is expressed at length.
EVERICH, *adj.* SAX. Every one *of many*. 373. 2194.
——— Each *of two*. 1188. 2098. 2101. 6986.
EW, *n.* SAX. Yew. 2925.
EXALTAT, *part. pa.* LAT. Exalted. 6286.
EXAMETRON. 13985. is explained by the context to signifie *a verse of six feet*. It usually signifies the *Heroic* verse, but here, I suppose, must be understood to mean the *Iambic*, in which the antient Tragedies were "*communly versified*."
EXECUTOUR, *n.* FR. Executioner. 7592.
EXECUTRICE, *n.* FR. A female executioner. T. iii. 618.
EXORCISATIONS, *n. pl.* FR. Exorcisms; conjurations. F. iii. 173.
EXPANS YERES. 11587. "In this and the following verses, the Poet describes the Alphonsine Astronomical tables by the several parts of them, wherein some technical terms occur, which were used by the old astronomers, and continued by the compilers of those tables. *Collect* years are certain sums of years, with the motions of the heavenly bodies corresponding to them, as of 20, 40, 60, &c. disposed into tables; and *Expans* years are the single years, with the motions of the heavenly bodies answering to them, beginning at 1, and continued on to the smallest *Collect* sum, as 20, &c. A *Root*, or *Radix*, is any certain time taken at pleasure, from which, as an era, the celestial motions are to be computed. By *Proporcionel convenientes* are meant the Tables of Proportional parts." Gloss. *Ur.* "*Argument* in astronomy is an arch whereby we seek another unknown arch proportional to the first." *Chambers.*
EXPECTAUNT, *part. pr.* FR. Waiting. R. 4571.
EXPLEITE, *v.* FR. To perform. R. 6174.
EY, *n.* SAX. An egg. 14851. 16374. *But as it were a grypes eye. Conf. Am.* 22.
——— *interj.* 10165.
EYEN, *n. pl.* SAX. Eyes. 152. 201.
EYRE for AIR. F. ii. 419.
EYRISH, *adj.* Aerial, belonging to the air. F. ii. 424. 427.

F.

FABLE, *n.* FR. Idle discourse. R. 1439. 6603.
FACONDE, *n.* FR. Eloquence. A. F. 558.
——— *adj.* Eloquent. Du. 926. A. F. 521.
FAERIE, *n.* FR. The nation of Faeries. 6441. See the note —Enchantment; the work of Faeries. 9617. 10513. *King of Faerie.* 13101, 8. *Quene of Faerie.* 10190. *Contrée of Faerie.* 13731.
FAIN, *adj.* SAX. Glad. 13241. *Than was I as* FAYNE *as foule of fayre morowe.* P. P. 47. b.
——— *adv.* Gladly. 9949.
FAINE, *v.* FR. To feign; to dissemble. R. 3069. *To swink and travail he not faineth.* R. 5685. He does not *feign*, or *pretend, only* to labour; i. e. he labours seriously.
FAIREHEDE, *n.* SAX. Beauty. R. 2484.
FAITOUR, *n.* FR. A lazy, idle fellow. P. P. 32. b. 33. b. *Faitard, Faiteor*, un paresseux, *piger*. Lacombe.
FALDING, *n.* 392. 3212. "A kind of coarse cloth. SK." He derives it from the A. S. Fealb, *plica*. However that may be, Helmoldus (Chron. Slav. l. 1, c. 1,) speaks of *indumenta lanea*, probably coarse enough, *quæ nos appellamus* FALDONES; and *Fallin* in Irish, according to Lhuyd, signifies a *mantle*. Giraldus Cambr. (Topog. Hibern. dist. 3, c. 10.) describes the Irish as clothed in *phalingis laneis, vice palliorum*. "FALDYNG CLOTH. *Amphibalus. Birrus.*" Prompt. Parv. "ROW CLOTH, as FALDYNG and other lyke. *Endromis. Amphibalus.*" Ibid. See Du Cange, in v. AMPHIBALUS.
FALL for FALLEN, *part. pa.* P. 149, col. 1, l. 44.
FALSEN, *v.* FR. To falsifie. 3175.—To deceive. R. 5416.
FALWE, *adj.* SAX. Yellow. 1366.
FALWES, *n. pl.* SAX. Harrowed lands. 6238.
FAMULAR, *adj.* LAT. Domestick. 9658.
FAN, *n.* See the n. on ver. 16991.
FANDE, *pa. t.* of FINDE, *v.* SAX. Found. R. 2707.
FANE, *n.* A weathercock. 8872. C. D. 79.
FANTASIE, *n.* FR. Fancy. 9451.
FANTOME, *n.* FR. Any false imagination. 5457. *Et dirent plusieurs qu'ils avoient été* EN FANTOSME. Froissart, v. i. c. 63.
FARCE, *v.* FR. *Farder.* To paint. R. 2285.
FARDEL, *n.* FR. A burthen. R. 5683.
FARE, *v.* SAX. To go. 1397. 12985. *To fare wel;* To speed; to be happy. 2437.
FAREN, FARE, *part. pa.* 7354. 7364. 13129.
FARES for FARETH, 4021.
FARING, *part. pr.* 11244. 13948.
FARE, *n.* seems to have been derived from the French v. *Faire*, whenever it can be interpreted by the word *Ado*. See ver. 1811. *This hote* FARE. ver. 3997. *For which the wardein chidde and made* FARE. ver. 4989. *What amounteth all this* FARE? ver. 13193. *Betwixt us two*

nedeth no strange FARE. T. iv. 532. *And leve this nice* FARE. In other instances it follows the sense of the Saxon v. *Fare*, as in the compound words *Welfare, Thoroughfare*, &c.

FARME, *n.* SAX. Food; a meal. C. D. 1750. See Spelman, in v. *Firma*.

FARSE, *v.* FR. *Farcir.* To stuff. 233.

FATHE, *n.* F. iii. 1050. See LATHE.

FAUTE, *n.* FR. Want. 10757.

FAWE, *adj.* SAX. Glad. 5802. as FAIN.

FAY, *n.* FR. Faith. 3284.

FAYRE, *adj.* SAX. Fair. 204. 234.

——— *adv.* Fairly; gracefully. 94. 275.

FEBLESSE, *n.* FR. Weakness. T. ii. 863.

FECCHE, *v.* SAX. To fetch. 6942. 7136.

FEE, *n.* SAX. Money. 6212. In R. 6044. it seems to signifie *inheritable possessions* in contradistinction to *money*, or *moveables*.

FEFFE, *v.* FR. To infeoff; to present. T. v. 1688. C. L. 932.

FEINE, *v.* FR. To feign. 738.

FEL, *adj.* SAX. Cruel; destructive. 7584. 13758.

FELAW, *n.* SAX. Fellow; companion. 6967.

FELAWSHIP, *n.* SAX. Company. 476.

FELAWSHIPE, *v.* To accompany. Bo. iv. m. 1. pr. 3.

FELDE, *n* SAX. A field. 1524.

FELDEN, *pa. t. pl.* of FELLE, *v.* SAX. Felled; made to fall. R. 911.

FELE, *adj.* SAX. Many. 8793. C. L. 191.

——— *v.* SAX. To feel. 6068. To have sense. 11039. To perceive. 15623.

FELL, *n.* SAX. Skin. T. i. 91.

FELONIE, *n.* FR. All sorts of criminal violence. 1996.

FELOUN, *adj.* FR. Cruel. R. 3250.

FEMINIE, *pr. n.* The country of Amazons. 868. See the note.

FEMININITEE, *n.* FR. Womanhood. 4780.

FEND, *n.* SAX. An enemy; the devil. 5200. 7030.

FENDLICHE, *adj.* Devilish. 5171. 5203.

FENNE, *n.* 12824. The name of the *Sections* of *Avicenne's* great work, entitled *Canun*. See CANON.

FEOFFED, *part. pa.* FR. Infeoffed. 9572.

FER, *adv.* SAX. Far. 4013. 5078.

FERRE, *comp.* 48. 1852. 2062. Further.

FERREST, *superl.* 496. Furthest.

FERD, FERED, *part. pa.* of FERE. Terrified. 15392. 16392. T. ii. 124.

——— FERDE, *pa. t.* of FARE. 1374. 3457. 10775.

FERDEN, *pa. t. pl.* 1649. 2119.

FERE, *n.* SAX. A companion; a wife. T. iv. 791. *In fere.* 4748. 4814. Together; in company.

——— for FIRE. R. 2471. T. i. 229.

——— *n.* SAX. Fear. 2346. 6604.

——— *v.* SAX. To terrifie. T. iv. 1483.

FERFORTH, FERFORTHLY, *adv.* SAX. Far forth. 962. 4992.

FERLY, *adj.* SAX. Strange. 4171.

FERMACIE for PHARMACIE, *n.* FR. A medicine. 2715.

FERME, *n.* FR. A farm. 253.

FERMERERE, *n.* LAT. *Infirmarius.* The officer, in a religious house, who had the care of the infirmary. 7441. Du Cange, *in* v.

FERNE, *adv.* SAX. Before. 10570. See the note.

FERS, *adj.* FR. Fierce. 1600.

——— *n.* Du. 654. seq. The piece at chess next to the king, which we and other European nations call the *queen*; though very improperly, as Hyde has observed. *Phers*, or *Pherzan*, which is the Persian name for the same piece, signifies the King's *Chief Counsellor*, or *General*. Hist. Shahilud. p. 88, 9.

FERTHING, *n.* SAX. A farthing; any very small thing. *No ferthing—of grese.* 134. Not the smallest spot of grease.

FEST, *n.* SAX. Fist. 12736.

FESTE, *n.* FR. Feast. 10375.

FESTEYING, *part. pr.* FR. Feasting. 10659.

FESTLICH, *adj.* Used to feasts. 10595.

FECCHE, *n.* SAX. A vetch. T. iii. 938.

FETE, *n.* FR. Work. 8305.

FETISE, *adj.* Well made; neat. 157.

FETISELY, *adv.* Neatly; properly. 124. 3205.

FETTE, FAT, *part. pa.* of FECCHE. 821. 2529. 5067.

FEY, *n.* FR. Faith. L. W. 2508.

FEYRE, *n.* FR. A fair, or market. 5803.

FIAUNCE, *n.* FR. Trust. R. 5481.

FIDEL, *n.* SAX. A fiddle. 298.

FILL for FELL, *pa. t.* of FALL. 1105. 2668.

FINCH, *n.* SAX. A small bird. *To pull a finch.* 654. was a proverbial expression, signifying, *To strip a man, by fraud, of his money. &c.* See R. 5983.

> If I may gripe a riche man,
> I shall so *pulle* him, if I can,
> That he shall in a fewe stoundes
> Lese all his markes and his poundes.—
> Our maidens shall eke *plucke* him so,
> That him shall neden *fethers* mo.—

See also R. 6820.

> Withoute scalding they hem *pulle*.

FIND, *v.* SAX. To find; to supply. 12471. See the n.

FINT for FINDETH. 4069. 15686.

FINE, FIN, *n.* FR. End. 4844. 9980.

——— *v.* FR. To cease. 6718. R. 1797.

——— *adj.* FR. *Of fine force.* T. v. 421. Of very necessity.

FIT, *n.* SAX. A division, or short portion of a poem. 13816. See Gloss. *Percy*, in v.

FITTINGEST, *adj. sup.* SAX. Most fitting. A. F. 551.

FIXE, *adj.* FR. Fixed. 11594. 16247.

FLAIE for FLEY, *pa. t.* of FLEE. Flew. C. N. 213.

FLAINE, *part. pa.* of FLAIE, *v.* SAX. Flaied, or flead. P. 155, col. 2, l. 62.

FLAMBE, *n.* FR. Flame. T. v. 302.

FLATOUR, *n.* FR. A flatterer. 15331. *Conf. Am.* 154. b.

FLAWE, *adj.* Yellow; from the LAT. *Flavus.* C. L. 782. Gloss. *Ur.*

FLECKED, *adj.* Spotted. 9722. 16033.

FLECKERING, *part. pr.* 1964. See FLICKER.

FLEE, *v. neut.* SAX. To Fly. 6102. 10436.

FLEEN, *n. pl.* SAX. Fleas. 16966.

FLEME, *v.* SAX. To banish. 17131. R. 6781.

FLEMED, *part. pa.* 15526.

FLEMER, *n.* Banisher. 4880.

FLETE, *v.* SAX. To float; to swim. 2399.

——— for FLETETH. 4883.

FLETING, *part. pr.* 1958.

FLICKER, *v. neut.* SAX. To flutter. P. 166, col. 2, l. 8. T. iv. 1221

FLIT, *v. neut.* SAX. To Fly. P. 154, col. 2. l. 3. R. 5359. *Elle fuit.* Orig.

——— *v. act.* R. 1812. To remove. 8.

FLITTED, *part. pa.* Removed; shifted. T. v. 1543.

FLITTERING, *part. pr.* Floating. Bo. iii. m. 9. *Fluitantis.* Orig.

FLO, *n.* SAX. An arrow. 17213. FLONE. *pl.* B. K. 469.

FLOCKMEL, *adv.* SAX. In a flock. 7962.

FLOREIN, *pr. n.* A species of gold coin. 12704.

FLOTERY, *adj.* SAX. Floating. See the n. on v. 2685

FLOTTE, *v.* Bo. iii. pr. 11. as FLETE.

——— *v.* FR. To float. Bo. iii. pr. 11.

FLOURELES, *adj.* Without flower. C. D. 1860.

FLOURETTE, *n.* FR. A small flower. R. 891.

FLOYTING. 91. Playing on the flute. See the note.

FOINE, *v.* FR. To make a pass in fencing; to push. 1686. 2852

FOISON, *n.* FR. Abundance. 3165. 4924.

FOLED, *part. pa.* SAX. Foaled. 7127.

FOLEHARDINESS, *n.* FR. Rashness. Bo. i. pr. 3.

FOLE-LARGE, *adj.* M. 117, col. 1, l. 26. P. 165. col. 1, l. 56. Foolishly liberal.

FOLIE, *n.* FR. Folly. 3148. 1800.

FOLILY, *adv.* Foolishly. 9277. 15896.

FOLWE, *v.* SAX. To follow. 530. 6165.

FOLY, *adj.* Foolish. R. 5006. 5065.

FOND, *adj.* SAX. Foolish. R. 5366.

——— *pa. t.* of FIND. 3819. 10121.

FONDE, *v.* SAX. To try. 4767. 9284. T. iii. 1161

FONG, *v.* SAX. To take. 4797.

FONNE, *n.* SAX. A fool. 4067.

——— *v.* To be foolish. C. L. 458.

FONT-STONE, *n.* SAX. A font for baptizing. 5143.

FOR, *prep.* SAX. *Pro.* LAT. *Pour.* FR. It is frequently prefixed to verbs in the infinitive mode, in the French

manner. *For to tellen.* 73. *For to don.* 78. *Pour dire; Pour faire. For to han ben.* 754. *Pour avoir été.*—It sometimes signifies—Against. *For percing of his herte.* 13791. Against, or to prevent, piercing. *For steling of the Rose.* R. 4229. Against stealing. See P. P. 31. *Some shall sow the sacke* for sheding *of the wheate.* i. e. to prevent shedding.

For, *conj.* Sax. *Quia.* Lat. *Pour ce que.* Fr. Because that. For *him luste to ride so.* 102. For *she wolde virtue plese.* 8092. For *I teche.* 12374.

—— in composition, has various powers. It is most commonly *intensive* of the signification of the word with which it is joined; as in *Fordronken, Fordry, Forfered,* &c., sometimes *privative,* as in *Forboden, Foryete;* and sometimes only *communicative of an ill sense,* as in *Forfaite, Forfare, Forjuged,* &c.

For, Fr. and *Ver,* Belg. have similar powers in composition.

Forbere, *v.* Sax. To abstain. R. 4751.

Forboden, *part. pa.* of Forbede, *v.* Sax. Forbidden. P. 166, col. 1, l. 32. R. 6616.

Forebrake, *pa. t.* Broke off. Bo. iv. pr. 1. *Abrupi.* Orig.

Forebruised, *part. pa.* Fr. Sorely bruised. 14532.

Force, *n.* Fr. *No force.* 7771. No matter. *I do no force.* 6816. I care not. *I do no force of your divinitee.* 7094. I care not for your divinity. *No force of deth.* 8968. No matter for death. *They yeve no force.* R. 4826. They care not. "*De fruit avoir* ne fait force." Orig.

Forcutte, *v.* Sax. To cut through. 17289.

Fordo *v.* Sax. To do away; to ruin. 13057.

Fordon, **Fordo**, *part. pa.* Undone. 11866. 17239.

Fordrive (*Fordriven*), *part. pa.* Sax. Driven away. R. 3782.

Fordronken, *part. pa.* Sax. Very drunken. 3122. 12608.

Fordry, *adj.* Sax. Very dry. 10723.

Fordwined, *part. pa.* Sax. Wasted away. R. 306.

Fore, (*Foren*), *part. pa.* of Fare, *v.* Sax. Gone. R. 2710.

—— *prep.* Sax. is seldom used by itself. In composition it has the power of *Before.*

Forein, *n.* L. W. 1960. A jakes. Gloss. *Ur.* from Sk. The context seems rather to require that it should signifie *An outward court,* or *garden.*

Foreweting, *n.* Sax. Foreknowledge. 15249.

Forewote, **Forewete**, *v.* Sax. To foreknow. 15240.

Forfaite, *v.* Fr. To misdo. P. 152, col. 1, l. 19.

Forefare, *v.* Sax. To fare ill. R. 5388.

Forfered, *part. pa.* Sax. Much afraid. 10841. T. iv. 1411.

Forgifte, *n.* Sax. Forgiveness. L. W. 1851.

Forgon, *inf. v.* Sax. To omit; to lose. 9959. 17244.

Forgrowen, *part. pa.* Sax. Overgrown. F. L. 45.

Forjuged, *part. pa.* Fr. Wrongfully judged. B. K. 275.

Forkerve, *v.* Sax. To carve, or cut through. 17289.

Forlaft, *part. pa.* Sax. Left off entirely. 12017.

Forlese, *v.* Sax. To lose entirely. P. 164, col. 2, l. 37.

Forlete, *v.* Sax. To give over; to quit. P. 148, col. 1, l. 49.

Forlore (*Forloren*), *part. pa.* Sax. Utterly lost. 3505.

Forloyne, *n.* Fr. *Forlonge.* A term of the chase, which signifies that the game is far off. Du. 386.

Forme, *adj.* Sax. First. *Adam oure forme father.* M. 109, col. 2, l. 2.

Formest, *adj. sup.* Sax. First. Du. 890.

Formell, A. F. 371. is put for the *female* of any fowl; more frequently for a *female eagle.* See ver. 445. 535.

Forpined, *part. pa.* Sax. Wasted away; tormented. 205. 1455.

Forsake, *v.* Sax. To denie. Bo. ii. pr. 3, 4.

Forshapen, *part. pa.* Sax. Transformed. T. ii. 66.

Forshronke (*Forshronken*), *part. pa.* Sax. Shrunk up. F. L. 358.

Forsleuthe, **Forslouthe**, **Forslugge**, *v.* Sax. To lose through sloth. 15102. P. 162, col. 1, l. 28.

Forsongen, *part. pa.* Sax. Tired with singing. R. 664.

Forster, *n.* Fr. A forester. 117.

Forstraught, *part. pa.* Sax. Distracted. 13035.

Forthby, *adv.* Sax. Forward by. 13499. 13532.

Forther, *v.* Sax. To further; to advance. T. ii. 1368.

Forthinke, *v.* Sax. To grieve; to vex. 9780. T. ii. 1414.

Forthought, *pa. t.* of Forthinke. R. 1671.

Forthren, *inf. m.* of Forther. T. v. 1706.

Forthy, *conj.* Sax. Therefore. 1843.

Fortroden, *part. pa.* of Fortread, *v.* Sax. Trodden down. P. 150, col. 1, l. 53.

Fortuit, *adj.* Fr. Accidental. Bo. v. pr. 1.

Fortune, *v.* Fr. To make fortunate. 419. To give good or bad fortune. 2379.

Fortunous, *adj.* Proceeding from fortune. Bo. ii. pr. 3, 4.

Forwaked, *part. pa.* Sax. Having waked long. 5016.

Forwandred, *part. pa.* Sax. Having wandered long. R. 3336.

Forwelked, *part. pa.* Sax. Much wrinkled. R. 360.

Forwept, *part. pa.* Having much wept. C. D. 1833.

Forwered, *part. pa.* Sax. Worn out. R. 235.

Forwerie, *adj.* Sax. Very weary. R. 3336.

Forword, (*Foreword*), *n.* Sax. A promise, or covenant. 831. 854.

Forwounded, *part. pa.* Sax. Much wounded. R. 1830.

Forwrapped, *part. pa.* Wrapped up. 12652. P. 153, col. 1, l. 35.

Foryelde, *v.* Sax. To repay. 8707. L. W. 457.

Foryete, *v.* Sax. To forget. 1884.

Foryetten, *part. pa.* 3055.

Foster, *n.* Fr. R. 6329. as Forster.

Fostred, *part. pa.* of Foster, *v.* Sax. Nourished. 8916, 9.

Fostring, *n.* Nutriment. 7427.

Fote-hot. 4858. Immediately. See the n. and add to the instances there quoted. Du. 375.

Fote-mantel. 474. means, I suppose, a sort of *riding-petticoat,* such as is now used by market-women.

Fother, *n.* Sax. A carriage-load; an indefinite large quantity. 532. 1910.

Foudre, *n.* Fr. Lightning. F. ii. 27.

Foule, *n.* Sax. A bird. 10463.

Found, *pa. t.* of Find. Supplied. 12471. See the n.

Founde, *v.* An. 244. as Fonde.

Foundred, *pa. t.* of Founder, *v.* Fr. Fell down. 2620.

Fowertie, *num.* Sax. Forty. R. 5733.

Foxerie, *n.* Foxish manners. R. 6795.

Fra for **Fro**, *prep.* Sax. From. It is sometimes used adverbially. *Til and fra.* 4037. To and fro. 2850.

Fraine, *v.* Sax. To ask. T. v. 1226.

Fraknes, *n. pl.* Sax. Spots, freckles. 2171.

Franchise, *n.* Fr. Frankness; generosity. 9861. 11828.

Frank, *n.* A denomination of French money; answering at present to the *Livre Tournois.* 13111.

Frankelein, *n.* Fr. See his Character. ver. 333–362. and the n. on ver. 333.

Fraught, *v.* Sax. To freight, load a ship. 4591.

Fre, *adj.* Sax. Willing; unconstrained. 854.—At liberty. 5631.—Liberal, bountiful. 13106. 13462.

Fredom, *n.* Sax. 46. 17075. as Franchise.

Freeltee, *n.* Fr. Frailty. 5674, 5.

Fregius for **Phrygius.** Du. 1070.

Fremde, **Fremed**, *adj.* Sax. Strange. 10743. T. ii. 248. *To frend ne to* fremed. P. P. 79.

Frenetike, *adj.* Fr. Frantick. T. v. 206.

Frensele, *n.* Fr. A frenzy. T. i. 728.

Frere, *n.* Fr. A Frier. See his Character. ver. 208–271. and P. P. 12. a. b.

Freshe, *v.* Fr. To refresh. R. 1513.

Fret, *n.* Fr. A band. L. W. 225, 8. F. L. 152.

Fret, **Frette**, *part. pa.* Fr. Fraught, filled. R. 4705. L. W. 1115. C. L. 124. or, perhaps, *Wrought in a kind of fretwork.* A sort of Blazon is called *Frettè.* In R. ver. 4705. And through the *fret full of falshede*—we should read—A trouthe *fret full of falshede.*

Frete, *v.* Sax. To eat, devour. 2070.

Freting, *part. pr.* 2021.

Frette (*Freted*), *part. pa.* 4895.

Freyne, *v.* Sax. 13530. 15901. as Fraine.

Frise, *pr. n.* Friezland. R. 1093.

Fro ye. T. i. 5. From you. *Ye* is put for *You,* that *Fro ye* may rime, in appearance at least, with *joye* and *Troye.* So in ver. 7038. *say ye* rimes to *praye.* See more of these double rimes in the n. on ver. 674. and add the following passages, in which *the (thee),* being the eleventh and last syllable of the verse, is to be pronounced without any accent.

Ver. 10987. *aloue the* rimes to *youthe.*
16131. *to the* ——— *sothe.*
16762. *hie the* ——— *swithe.*

Frote, *v.* Fr. To rub. 3746. T. iii. 1121.

Frouncelee, *adj.* Fr. Without wrinkle. R. 860.

Froward, *adj.* Sax. Averse. R. 4940.

Fructuous, *adj.* Fr. Fruitful. 17384.

Fruitestere, *n.* Sax. A *female* seller of fruit. 12402.

Ful-drive, *part. pa.* Fully driven, completed. 12402.

Fulke (f. Folke), *n.* Sax. People. F. i. 73.

Fulsumnesse, *n.* Sax. Satiety. 10719.

Fumestere, *pr. n.* of a plant; Fumitory. 14969. Fumaria —*purgat bilem et humores adustos.* Ray's Synopsis.

Fumosite, *n.* Fr. Fumes arising from excessive drinking. 10672. 12501.

Fundament, *n.* Fr. Foundation. 7685.

Furial, *adj.* Fr. Raging. 10762.

Fusible, *adj.* Fr. Capable of being melted. 16324.

Fy, *interj.* Fr. 7309. *I say fy.* 4500. I crie shame.

G.

Garre, *v.* Fr. To talk idly; to lye. 3510. 15072. *Gabbe I of this?* Bo. ii. pr. 5. *Num id mentior?*

Gacides. F. iii. 116. is probably a misprint for *Æacides;* though I do not know that Chiron had any right to that title.

Gadling, *n.* Sax. An idle vagabond. R. 938.

Gadred, *part. pa.* Sax. Gathered. 4379.

Gailer, *n.* Fr. Gaoler. 1476.

Gaillard, *adj.* Fr. Brisk, gay. 3336. 4365.

Gaitre-beries. 14971. Berries of the dog-wood tree; *Cornus fœmina.*

Galaxie, *pr. n.* The milky way; a tract in the heaven so called. F. ii. 428.

Gale, *v.* Sax. See the n. on ver. 6414.

Galfride, *pr. n.* Geoffrey of Monmouth. F. iii. 382. Geoffrey Vinsauf. C. L. 11. See Gaufride.

Galice, *pr. n.* A province of Spain. 468. The famous shrine of *St. James at Compostella* was in Galicia.

Galingale, *pr. n.* Sweet cyperus. 383.

Gallien, Galian, *pr. n.* Galen. 433. 12240. See the notes.

Galoche, *n.* Fr. A shoe. 10669.

Galpe, *v.* Sax. To gape, to yawn. 16984.

Galping, *part. pr.* Gaping, yawning. 10664.

Galwes, *n. pl.* Sax. The gallows. 6240. 14652.

Gan, *pa. t.* of Ginne, *v.* Sax. Began. 11153. Gannen, *pl.* T. ii. 194.

Gar, *v.* Sax. To make. 4130.

Gardebrace, *n.* Fr. Armour for the arm. C. D. 1554.

Gargate, *n.* Fr. The throat. 15341.

Garisoun, R. 3249. Seems to be used as a v. To heal. The Orig. has *Garison*, a *n.* Healing, recovery.

Garnement, *n.* Fr. A garment. Magd. 354.

Garner, *n.* Fr. A granary, or store-room. R. 1148. 6810.

Garnison, *n.* Fr. A guard, or garrison. M. 107., col. 2, l. 68. R. 4204.

Gastness, *n.* Sax. Gastliness. Bo. iii. pr. 5.

Gate, Gatte, *pa. t.* of Get, *v.* Sax. Gate; Begate. R. 2612. L. W. 2561.

—— *n.* Sax. A way. *Went her gate.* R. 3332. Went her way.

Gatisden, *pr. n.* 436. John Gatesden, author of a medical work, entitled *Rosa Anglicana*, in the XIVth Century. See Tanner, in v.

Gat-tothed. 470. See the note.

Gaude, *n.* Fr. Jest. 12323. T. ii. 351.

Gaudes, *pl.* Ridiculous tricks. P. 161, col. 1, l. 45.

Gauded. 152. See the note.

Gaufride, *pr. n.* 15353. See the note.

Gaure, *v.* To stare. 3825. 5332. *For them, that* gaured *and cast on me their sight.* Lydg. *Trag.* B. ix. f. 22. b.

Gawain, *pr. n.* nephew to King *Arthur*, by his sister, married to King *Lot.* So says the *British History*, which goes under the name of *Geoffrey of Monmouth;* and I believe it will be in vain to look for any more authentic genealogist of all that family. He is there called *Walganus.* The French Romancers, who have built upon Geoffrey's foundations, agree in describing Gawain as a model of *knightly courtesy.* To this his established character our author alludes in ver. 10409. and in R. 2209.

Gayler, *n.* Fr. 1472. as Gailer.

Geant, *n.* Fr. Giant. *The Crane the geant.* A. F. 344.

Gear, *n.* F. L. 26. See Gere.

Gende, for Gent. B. K. 127.

Genelon, *pr. n.* of one of *Charlemaigne's* officers, who, by his treachery, was the cause of the defeat at *Roncevaux*, the death of *Roland*, &c. for which he was torn to pieces by horses. This at least is the account of the author who calls himself *Archbishop Turpin*, and of the Romancers who followed him; upon whose credit the name of *Genelon*, or *Ganelon*, was for several centuries a synonymous expression for *the worst of traitors.* Our author alludes to his treachery, ver. 14699. 15233. and to his punishment, ver. 13124. See also Du. 1121.

Gent, *adj.* Fr. Neat, pretty. 3234. 13645.

Genterie, *n.* Fr. Gentility. 6728.

Gentil, *adj.* Fr. in its original sense means *Well-born; of a noble family.* 6735. R. 2194. *Il y avoit* un Chevalier, *Capitaine de la ville;—point* gentilhomme *n'estoit:—et l'avoit fait, pour sa vaillance, le Roy Edouard Chevalier.* Froissart, v. ii. c. 77.—It commonly put for *Civil; liberal; gentlemanlike.*

Gentillesse, *n.* Fr. follows the significations of Gentil.

Geomancie, *n.* Fr. Divination by figures made on the earth. P. 160, col. 1, l. 27.

Gere, *n.* Sax. All sorts of *instruments;* of Cookery. 354. of War. 2182. of Apparel. 8248. of Chemistry. 16763. *In hir quaint geres.* 1533. In their strange fashions.

Gerie, Gerful. 1538. 1540. Changeable. Probably from the Fr. *Girer.* To turn round. Gierful. T. iv. 286.

Gerlond, *n.* Fr. A garland. 668. The name of a dog. 15389

Gesse, *v.* Sax. To guess. 2595. 3467.

Gest, *n.* Sax. A guest. 8214.

Geste, *v.* See the n. on ver. 17354.

Gestes, *n. pl.* Lat. Actions; adventures. T. ii. 1349 *The Roman gestes.* 10158. See the note.

Gestour, *n.* A relater of gestes. See the n. on ver. 13775.

Get, *n.* Fr. *Geste.* Fashion; behaviour. 684. See the note. *With that false get.* 16745. With that cheating contrivance.

Gethe, for Goeth. L. W. 2143.

Gie, *v.* Sax. To guide. 15604. 15627.

Gigges, *n. pl.* F. iii. 852. Irregular sounds, produced by the wind, &c. *Gigue*, Fr. signified *a musical instrument*, like a fiddle; and from thence *a sort of light tune.* Menage, in v. It is probably a word of Teutonic original. See Junius.

Gilbertin, *pr. n.* An English Physician of the xiiith Century. See Fabricius *Bibl. Med. Æt.* in v. Gilbertus de Aquila.

Gilour, *n.* Fr. A deceiver. 4319.

Gilt, *part. pa.* Sax. Gilded; of the colour of gold. L. W. 230.

Gilt, *n.* Sax. Guilt. 5969.

Gilte-les, *adj.* Sax. Free from guilt. 1312. 1314.

Giltif, *adj.* Sax. Guilty. 5088. *Conf. Am.* 62. b.

Gin, *n.* Fr. Engine; contrivance. 10442. 16633.

Gingiber, *n.* Fr. Ginger. R. 1369.

Ginne, *v.* Sax. To begin. T. v. 657.

Gipciere, *n.* Fr. A pouch or purse. 359.

Gipe, *n.* Fr. An upper frock, or cassock. R. 7214.

Gipon, *n.* Fr. A short cassock. 75. 2122.

Girde, *v.* Sax. To strike; to smite. 14464. This word is perhaps the original of *Gride*, in Spenser. See *Obs. on Sp.* v. ii. p. 62.

Girdelstede, *n.* Sax. The waist; the place of the girdle. R. 826.

Girles, *n. pl.* Sax. Young persons, either male or female. 668.

Girt, *part. pa.* of Girde. *Thurgh girt.* 1012. Smitten through.

Gisarme, *n.* Fr. A battle-ax. R. 3978. See Du Cange, in v. *Gisarma.*

Gise, *n.* Fr. Guise; fashion. 2127. *At his owen gise.* 668. In his own manner; as he would wish.

Gite, *n.* Fr. A gown. 3052. 6141.

GITERNE, *n.* FR. A guitar. 3333. 4394.
GITERNING, *n.* Playing on a Giterne. 3363.
GLADE, *v.* SAX. To make glad. 11290. 14817.
GLADER, *n.* One that maketh glad. 2224.
GLADSOM, *adj.* SAX. Pleasant. 14784.
GLASE for GLOSE, *v.* T. v. 469.
——— *v.* SAX. To put glass into windows. Du. 323.
GLASINGE, *n.* Glass-work. Du. 327.
GLE, *n.* SAX. Mirth. 13769.—Musick. T. ii. 1036. GLEES, *pl.* Musical instruments. F. iii. 119.
GLEDE, *n.* SAX. A burning coal. 3379. GLEDES, *pl.* 3881. Sparks of fire.
GLEIRE, *n.* FR. The white of an egg. 16274.
GLENT, *pa. t.* Glanced. T. iv. 1223.
GLEVE, *n.* FR. *Glaive.* A lance. C. L. 544.
GLIMSING, *n.* Glimmering. 10257.
GLITEREN, *pr. t. pl.* of GLITTER, *v.* SAX. 979.
GLODE, *pa. t.* of GLIDE, *v.* SAX. 10707. 13832. *She* GLODE *forth, as an adder doth. Conf. Am.* 105.
GLOMBE, *v.* SAX. To look gloomy. R. 4356.
GLOSE, *n.* FR. A comment or interpretation. 7374.
——— *v.* To comment, or interpret. 5609. 5701.—To speak tenderly. 10225.—To flatter. 6091. 16983.
GLOTON, *n.* FR. A glutton. R. 4307.
GLOWEDEN, *pa. t. pl.* of GLOW, *v.* SAX. 2134.
GNARRE, *n.* SAX. A hard knot in a tree. 551.
GNAT, *n.* SAX. is put for any *little, worthless* thing. 5929. 17204.
GNIDING, *part. pr.* SAX. Rubbing. 2506.
GNOFFE, *n.* 3188. "An old cuff; a miser." Gloss. *Ur.* I know not upon what authority.
GNOWE, *pa. t.* of GNAWE, *v.* SAX. 14758.
GO, *v.* SAX. means sometimes *To walk*, in contradistinction to *riding.* 1353. 2254.
—— *(Gon), part. pa.* T. ii. 795.
GOBBET, *n.* FR. A morsel; a bit. 698.
GOD, *n.* SAX. *God taforne.* R. 7294. T. i. 1060. God going before. *Deo favente.—Goddes armes two.* 6415. 12588. *Goddes bones.* 12629. 12906. Vulgar oaths—*A Goddes kichel.* 7329. See the note. *A' Goddes half.* 5632. See HALFE.
GODE, GOOD, *n.* SAX. Wealth; goods. 7534, 5.
GODE-LES, *adj.* Without money or goods. 13220.
GODELYHEDE, *n.* SAX. Goodness. R. 4604. T. iii. 1736.
GODENESS, *n.* SAX. *At godeness.* R. 1453. At advantage. And so we should read in R. 3462. where the Editt. have *At gode mes.* The Orig. has *en bon point.*
GODSIB, *n.* SAX. A gossip; a godfather. P. 167, col. 2, l. 58.
GOFISH, *adj.* Foolish. T. iii. 585. from the FR. *Goffe;* Dull, stupid.
GOLD, *n.* A flower, commonly called *A Turnsol.* 1931. Gower says, that Leucothea was changed

> *Into a floure was named* GOLDE,
> *Which stont governed of the sonne.*
> Conf. Am. 121. b.

GOLD-HEWEN, *adj.* SAX. Of a golden hewe, or colour. 2502.
GOLDSMITHRIE, *n.* SAX. Goldsmith's work. 2500.
GOLET, *n.* FR. The throat, or gullet. R. 7096.
GOLIARDEIS. See the n. on ver. 562.
GOMME, *n.* FR. Gum. L. W. 121.
GON, *inf. m.* SAX. To go. 2512. *So mote I gon.* 3116. 11089. So may I *fare* well. *So mote I ride or go.* 7524. So may I *fare* well, riding or walking, i. e. in all my proceedings. See GO.
—— *pr. t. pl.* 771. 2604. 2965.
—— *part. pa.* Gone. 4437. 5137.
GONFANON, *n.* FR. A banner, or standard. R. 1201. 2018.
GONG, *n.* SAX. A little-house; a jakes. P. 167, col. 1, l. 36.
GONNE, *n.* A gun. L. W. 637. F. iii. 553.
GONNEN, GONNE, *pa. t. pl.* of GINNE. 11230. 15065.
GORE, *n.* See the n. on ver. 3237. since which it has been suggested to me by a learned person, whom I have not the honour to know, that *Gore* is a common name for a *slip* of cloth or linen, which is inserted in order to widen a garment in any particular place. GOOR OF A CLOTH. *Lacinia.* Prompt. Parv. See also the Glossary to Kennet's Paroch. Antiq. in v. *Gore.* This sense will suit very well with the context of ver. 3237, but hardly, I think, with that of ver. 13719; unless we suppose, that *gore* is there put for *shirt*, because *shirts* have usually *gores* in them. The expression would certainly be very aukward, and unlike Chaucer's general manner, but in this place, *the Rime of Sire Topas*, he may be supposed to have taken it purposely from one of those old Romances, which are the objects of his ridicule. See the n on ver. 13845.
GOSE for GOES. C. D. 1286. Goeth.
GOSPELLERE, *n.* SAX. Evangelist. R. 6887.
GOSSOMER, *n.* A thin cobweb-like substance which flies about in the air. 10573.
GOST, *n.* SAX. Spirit; mind. 5679.
GOTH, *imp. m.* 2 *pers. pl.* Go ye. 2560. 14200.
GOVERNAILLE, *n.* FR. Government, steerage. 9068.
GOUNE-CLOTH. 7829. 7834. Cloth enough to make a gown.
GOURD, *n.* A vessel to carry liquor; perhaps so called from its shape. 17031, 40.
GOWER, *pr. n.* T. v. 1855. An eminent English poet, to whom Chaucer *directs* his *Troilus and Creseide.* Some circumstances relating to him are touched upon in the Essay, &c. n. 55. the Discourse, &c. §. XIV. XV. *n.* 15, 16 and in the notes, p. 202.
GRACE. *n.* FR. Favour. 3071. *Sory grace.* 6398. *Harde grace.* 16133. Misfortune. T. i. 713.

> So full of sorowe am I, sothe to sayne,
> That certainly no more *harde grace*
> May sit on me, for why? there is no space.

So Hercules, *ap. Euripid.* Hę. M. 1250.

> Γίμαι κακαν δη, κ' ουκετ' ισθ' ὅστις τυθῆς.

The criticism of Longinus, sect. XL. is perhaps equally applicable to both passages.

With harde grace. 7810. is to be understood as spoken, in a parenthesis, of the Cherl; *Misfortune attend him!* See WITH. *Save your grace.* M. 108. col. 2, l. 59. With your favour. *Sauve votre grace.*
GRACIOUS, *adj.* FR. Agreeable. 3693. Graceful. 8489.
GRAME, *n.* SAX. Grief. 16371. Anger. T. iii. 1030.

Felle it to gode or GRAME. P. L. 337.

GRAMMERE, *n.* FR. Grammar. 13466.
GRAND MERCIE, FR. Great thanks. 8964.
GRANE, *n.* FR. A grain; a single seed. T. ii. 1028.
GRANGE, *n.* FR. A Farm-house. 3668.
GRAPINEL, *n.* FR. A grappling-iron. L. W. 640.
GRATCHE, R. 7368. "is perhaps the same with *Graithe*, if not mistaken for it." Gloss. *Ur.* See GREITHE. The Orig. has—S'AOURNE *comme beguyne.*
GRAVE, *v.* SAX. To carve; to engrave. T. ii. 47. T. iii. 1468.
——— *(Graven). part. pa.* Buried. 6647. 11288.
GRAUNSON, *pr. n.* C. M. V. ver. ult. See *An account of the works of Chaucer*, &c. in this vol. p. 446.
GRE, *n.* FR. Pleasure; satisfaction, from *Gratus*, LAT. *To receive in gre.* 4679. 9027. To take kindly. *The gre.* 2735. The prize. See the note.—From *Gradus*, LAT. it signifies *A step*, or *degree.* 9249.
GREDE, *n.* SAX. A greedy person. R. 6002.
——— *v.* BARB. LAT. To cry. C. N. 135.
GREIN, *n.* FR. *Grein de Paris.* R. 1369. *de Paradis.* Orig. Grains of Paradise; a sort of spice. The same are meant in ver. 3690.—*Grain of Portingale.* 15465. A sort of scarlet-dye, called *Kermes*, or *Vermillion.*
GREITHE, *v.* SAX. To prepare, make ready. 4307. 14512.
GRENEHED, *n.* SAX. Childishness. 4583.
GRESE, *n.* FR. Grease. 135. 6069.
GRETE for GREDE, *v.* R. 4116.
GRETTE, *pa. t.* of GRETE, *v.* SAX. Greeted; saluted. 5471. 8828.
GREVES, *n. pl.* SAX. Groves. 1497. R. 3019.
GRILLE, *adj.* R. 73. f. Horrible. GRYMM. GRYL AND HORRYELL *Horridus.* Prompt. Parv.
GRINT for GRINDETH. 5971
GRINTE, *pa. t.* of GRIND, *v.* SAX. Ground. *Grint with his teeth.* 7743. Gnashed with h. t.
GRINTING, *n.* Grinding; gnashing. P. 150, col. 2, l. 37.
GRIS, *n.* FR. A species of Furr. See the n. on ver. 194.
GRISLY, *adj.* SAX. Dreadful. 1973. 6318.

Grocne, *v.* Sax. To grutch; to murmur. 3861. 6025.
Groff, *adj.* Sax. Flat on the ground. 951. 13605. R. 2561.
Groine, *n.* Fr. The snowt of a swine. P. 149, col. 2, l. 29. A hanging lip. T. i. 350.
——— *v.* To hang the lip, in discontent. R. 7099.
Grone, *v.* Fr. To groan. To grunt. 7411.
Gront, *pa. t.* 14627. Groaned.
Grope, *v.* Sax. To search; to examine by feeling. 7390. 7723.
Grot, *n.* A coin, worth four-pence. 6874. 7546.
Grounden, *part. pa.* of Grind. 16243.
Grovning, *n.* 2462. Discontent. See Groine.
Guerdon, *n.* Fr. Reward; Recompense. 7460. 8759.
——— *v.* To reward. P. 152, col. 1, l. 55.
Guerdonles, *adj.* Without reward. B. K. 400.
Guido, *pr. n.* L. W. 1462. Guido de Columpnis. F. iii. 381. *Guido dalle Colonne*, of Messina in Sicily, a lawyer and poet, died about 1290. Quadrio, vol. ii. p. 160. His *History of the Trojan war*, to which our author refers, was written in Latin, and finished in 1287. See the n. on ver. 15147. I have there intimated my suspicion, that he translated it, for the most part, from a French Romance of *Benoit de Sainte More*. However that may have been, Guido's work is certainly the original, from which the later writers of the middle ages have generally taken their accounts of Trojan affairs. It was translated into Italian in 1324 by *Filippo Ceffi*, a Florentine. Quadrio, vol. vi. p. 475. A French translation is also extant, in which it is said to be *translatée en François* premierement *du commandement du Maire de la cité de Beauvais, en nom et en honneur de Karles le roy de France*, l'an mil ccc. quatre vingtz. MS. Reg. 16. F. ix. This is probably the French translation mentioned by Lydgate in the Prologue to his *Boke of Troye*, which is a mere paraphrase *in verse* of Guido's history, with some digressions and additions of his own. Lydgate's work was finished, as he tells us himself at the end, in 1420.

H.

Habergeon, *n.* Fr. A diminutive of *Hauberg*, a coat of mail. 76. 13790.
Habilitee, *n.* Fr. Ability. C. L. 1044.
Habitacles, *n. pl.* Fr. Places of habitation. F. iii. 104.
Habite, *v.* Fr. To dwell. R. 660.
Habundant, *part. pr.* Fr. Abundant. 7935.
Hackenaie, *n.* Fr. An ambling horse, or pad. R. 1137.
Hacking, *n.* Fr. Cutting in pieces. F. iii. 213.
Hadden, *pa. t. pl.* of Have. 375. 762.
Haf, *pa. t.* of Heve, *v.* Sax. Heaved, raised. 2430.
Haie, **Hay**, *n.* Fr. A hedge. R. 54. 3007.
Haile, *n.* Sax. Health; welfare. 4087.
Hailes, *pr. n.* of an Abbey in Gloucestershire. See the n. on ver. 12587.
Haire, *n.* Fr. A hair-cloth. 15601. R. 438.
Hakeney, *n.* Fr. 16027. as Hackenaie.
Haketon, *n.* Fr. A short cassock, without sleeves. 13789.
Halden for Holden, *part. pa.* of Hold. 4206.
Halfe, *n.* Sax. A side; a part. *A' Goddes half.* 5632. Du. 370. On God's part; with God's favour. *A' this half's God.* T. L. i. 325. b. On this side of God. *Four halves.* 3481. Four sides.
Hali, *pr. n.* 433. An Arabian Physician. Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* t. xiii. p. 17.
Halke, *n.* Sax. A corner. 11433. 15779.
Halpe, *pa. t.* of Help, *v.* Sax. 14052. R. 1911.
Hals, *n.* Sax. The neck. 4493.
Halse, *v.* Sax. See the n. on ver. 13575.
Halt, *pa. t.* of Hold, *v.* Sax. Held, or kept. 5141.
——— for Holt, i. e. Holdeth. Du. 621.
Halte, *v.* Fr. To go lamely. Du. 622.
Hame for Home, *n.* Sax. 4030.
Hamele, *v.* Sax. To hamstring; to cut off. T. ii. 964.
Hamers, *n. pl.* Sax. Hammers. Du. 1164.
Han, *inf. m.* of Have, *v.* Sax. 754. 1048. 2109.
——— *pr. t. pl.* 931. 1022. 7581.
Hanerelines, P. 155, col. 2, l. 50. appears from the context to mean a *sort of breeches*.
Happe, *n.* Sax. Chance. 13168. Bo. v. pr 1.
——— *v.* To happen. 587. 6467.
Hard, *adj.* Sax. Hard. *Harde grace.* 7810. 16133. Misfortune. See Grace. It is used adverbially. 9879. 13133.
Harde, *v.* Sax. To make hard. 10559.
Hardely *(Hardily)*, *adv.* Fr. Boldly. 10147. *adv.* Sax. Certainly. 7867. 7901. 9186. T. v. 673.
Harding, *n.* Sax. Hardening. 10557.
Harie, *v.* Fr. To hurry. To harie *and drawe.* P. 149, col. 2, l. 64.
Haried, *part. pa.* Hurried. 2728. *Ils seroient* hâriez *en grand manere.* Froissart, v. i. c. 225.
Harlot, *n.* See the n. on ver. 649.
Harlotries, *n. pl.* Ribaldries. 563.
Harneis, *n.* Fr. Armour. 1615. Furniture. 5718.
Harneise, *v.* Fr. To dress. R. 2648.
Harow, *interj.* Fr. See the n. on ver. 3286.
Harpour, *n.* Fr. A harper. T. ii. 1030. In the Act of Resumption, 28 H. vi. there is a proviso in favour of John Turges, *Harpour with the Queen*, for the reversion of an annuity of 10 Marks, after the death of William Langton, Minstrell.
Harwed, *p. t.* of Harwe, *v.* Sax. See the n. on ver. 3512.
Hasardour, *n.* Fr. A Player at Hazard; A gamester. 12530.
Hasardrie, *n.* Fr. Gaming, in general. 12524.
Haselwode. T. iii. 892. V. 585. 1174. All these passages plainly allude to the same proverbial saying, which appears to have been used in scorn or derision of any improbable hope or expectation. Why it was so used, is beyond my reach to discover. It may be proper however to mention that in T. iii. 892. MS. Harl. 3943. reads—*Haselwode* is *shaken*;—and that the passage, T. v. 1174. is an imitation of the following in the *Filostrato*. See Essay, &c. n. 62.

> Ma pandero seco tacitamente
> Ride de cio che Troylo dicea—
> Chel si fusse sembiante facea
> Di credèrlo, e dicia, *di mungibelo*
> *Aspetta il vento questo tapinello.*

Hastif, *adj.* Fr. Hasty. 3545.
Hastifly, *adv.* Hastily. 13546.
Hate, *v.* Sax. To be named. R. 38.
Hauberk, *n.* Fr. A coat of mail. 13792.
Haven, *inf. m.* of Have, *v.* Sax. Bo. iv. pr. 2. It is more commonly abbreviated into Han.
Haunce, *v.* Fr. To raise, to enhance. B. K. 431.
Haunt, *n.* Fr. Custom; practice. 449.
Haunte, *v.* Fr. To practise. P. 164. col. 2. l. 4.
Haunteden, *pa. t. pl.* 12298. Practised, frequented.
Hautein, *adj.* Fr. Haughty. 3739.—Loud. 12264.—A *hautein faucon.* L. W. 1118. A high-flying hawk; *Faulcon haultain.* Fr.
Havoir for Avoir, *n.* Fr. Wealth. R. 4720.
Hawe, *n.* Sax. A hawthorn-berry. 6241. T. iii. 856.—A farm-yard. 12789. A church-yard. P. 165, col. 1, l. 10.
Hawebake, 4515. See the note.
He, *pron.* Sax. is often prefixed in all its cases to proper names *emphatically*, according to the Saxon usage. *He Moises.* 10564. *He Tityus.* T. i. 787. See the n. on ver. 9594.—He is also frequently used for It in all cases. 7550. 7838. 9737. See the n. on ver. 9594.
Hed, *n.* Sax. Head. *On his hed.* 1346. On pain of losing his head. See the note.
Hedde for Hidde (Hidden.) L. W. 208.
Hegges, *n. pl.* Sax. Hedges. 15224.
Heisugge. A. F. 612. *Curruco*, a little bird, which is supposed to hatch the Cuckow's egg, and to be destroyed by the young Cuckows. *Sp.*
Hele, *v.* Sax. Helan. To hide. 6531. R. 6882.
——— *v.* Sax. Hælan. To heal; to help. 1250. 10953.
——— *n.* Sax. Health. 3104. 4237.
Heleles, *adj.* Helpless. T. v. 1592.
Helise, *pr. n.* Elysium. C. L. 119.
Helmed, *part. pa.* Fr. Armed with an helmet. 14376. T. ii. 593.
Helowis, *pr. n.* 6259. Eloisa, the mistress of Abelard. See a summary of their history in *Rom. de la Rose*, ver. 9172—9247.
Hem, *obl. c. pl.* of He. Them. See Him; and Essay, &c. n. 22.

HEMSELF, HEMSELVE, HEMSELVEN. See SELF.

HENCHMEN, *n. pl.* Pages. F. L. 252. See a note on the *Midsummer Night's Dream* of Shakespeare. Act. ii. Sc. 2. Last. Edit.

HENDE, HENDY, *adj.* SAX. Civil; courteous. 6868. 3199.

HENEN. 4031. HENNE. 2358. 3887. HENNES. R. 4922. HENS. 12621. *adv.* SAX. Hence.

HENG, *pa. t.* and *part.* of HANG, *v.* SAX. 360. 678. 9757.

HENNESFORTH, *adv.* SAX. Henceforth. 10972.

HENTE, *v.* SAX. To take hold of; to catch. 906. 7082.

HENT, *pa. t.* and *part.* 700. 6899. 1583.

HEPE, *n.* SAX. A heap. *To hepe.* T. iii. 1770. Bo. iv. pr. 6. Together; in a heap.—The fruit of the Dog-rose. 13677.

HERAUD, *n.* FR. A herald. 2535.

HERBERGAGE, *n.* FR. Lodging. 4327.

HERBERGEOURS, *n. pl.* FR. Providers of lodgings; Harbingers. 5417.

HERBERWE, *n.* SAX. An inn; a lodging. 767. 4143.—The place of the Sun. 11347. In ver. 405. (see the note) it rather means, I think, *A harbour.*—HERBER. T. ii. 1705. F. L. 49. An arbour.

——— *v.* SAX. To lodge. R. 6145.

HERD, HIERDE, *n.* SAX. A keeper. 605. 15660.—HERDEGROMES. F. iii. 135. Shepherd-boys.

HERDES, *n. pl.* Coarse flax. *Herde,* fibra lini. Kilian. R. 1233.

That not of hempe ne heerdis *was.*

So this ver. is written in Ms. Hunter. The Orig. has only—*elle ne fut de bourras.*

HERE for HIRE, *pron.* 2059. 3691. 4880. and in other places, *for the sake of the rime.*

HERE, *adv.* SAX. In this place.

——— in composition, signifies this, without including any idea of *place. Hereagaines.* 3041. Against this. *Herebeforn.* 1586. Before this.

——— *v.* SAX. To hear. 2347.

HERD, HERDE, *pa. t.* and *part.* 221. 955. 1507.

HERDEN, *pa. t. pl.* 15382.

HERE, *n.* SAX. Hair. 677.

HEREN, *adj.* Made of hair. 12670.

HERKING, *part. pr.* of HERKE, *v.* SAX. Hearkening. 10392.

HERMES, *pr. n.* 16902. A chemical treatise *under his name* is extant in the *Theat. Chemic.* t. iv. See Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* L. i. c. 10. HERMES BALLENUS. F. iii. 183. Whether a different person from him just mentioned, I cannot tell.

HERNE, *n.* SAX. A corner. 11433. 16126.

HERONERE, *n.* FR. A hawk made to flie only at the heron. T. iv. 413. L. W. 1118.

HERONSEWES, *n. pl.* FR. Young Herons. 10382. See the note.

HERTE for HURT, *v.* SAX. Du. 883.

——— *n.* SAX. Heart. *Herte-blood.* 6300. 12836. Heart's blood. *Herte-spone.* See the n. on ver. 2608.

HERTELES, *adj.* Without courage. 14914.

HERTLY, *adj.* Hearty. 10319.

HERY, *v.* SAX. To praise 8492. 13548.

HERYING, *n.* Praise. 13389.

HESTE, *n.* SAX. Command. 12574.—Promise. R. 4475. 7.

HET, HETTE, *pa. t.* of HETE, *v.* SAX. Heated. A. F. 145.

HETE, *v.* SAX. To promise. 2400. 4754. To be called. Du. 200. See HIGHTE.

HETHENESSE, *n.* SAX. Country of Heathens. 49. 5532.

HETHING, *n.* SAX. Contempt. 4108. *All is thy* HETHING *fallen upon thee.* P. L. 273.

HEVE, *v.* SAX. To heave, to raise. 552.—*v. neut.* To labour. T. ii. 1209.

HEVED, *n.* SAX. Head. F. ii. 42. *Every virtue in my heved.* So I apprehend this line should be read, instead of *in* me *heved.*

HEVEN-QUENE, *n.* SAX. The queen of heaven; the Virgin Mary. 16557.

HEW OF LINCOLN, *pr. n.* 13614. See Discourse, &c. §. XXXII.

HEWE, *v.* SAX. To cut. 1424.

——— *v. neut.* C. L. 980. T. L. i. 325. b. *He that* heweth *to hie, with chippes he may lese his sight.* So *Conf. Am.* 18. b.

Full ofte he heweth up so hye,
That chyppes fallen in his eye.

HEWE, *n.* SAX. Colour; appearance. 10901. T. ii. 21.

HEWED, *part. pa.* Coloured. 11557.

HEXT, *adj. superl.* SAX. Highest. C. D. 345. *Hegh, Heghest, Heghst, Hext.* In the same manner *Next* is formed from *Negh.*

HIDOUS, *adj.* FR. Dreadful. 3590.

HIDOUSLY, *adv.* Terribly. 1703.

HIE, *v.* SAX. To hasten. 10605. C. D. 1550.

——— *n.* Haste; diligence. *In,* or *On hie,* 2981. 4029. T. iv. 1385. In haste.

——— HIGHE, *adj.* SAX. High. *In high and low.* 819. 5413. See the n. on ver. 819.

HIERDESSE, *n.* SAX. A shepherdess. T. i. 654. See HERDE.

HIGHEN, F. iii. 1062. is perhaps miswritten for *Highe.*

HIGHT, *n.* SAX. Highth. 1892. *On hight.* 1786. seems to signify—aloud; in a high voice. *En haut.* FR.

HIGHTE, *v.* SAX. See the n. on ver. 1016.

HIM, *obl. c.* of HE, is often used alone in that *reciprocal* sense, which is generally expressed by the addition of the adj. *Self.* 3052. *Than hath he don his frend,* ne him, *no shame,* i. e. nor himself. *As he* him *laid.* 1380. *And clad* him. 1411. *And bare* him. 1449.

It is also frequently put without the usual preposition. *Him to grete shame.* 17208. To great shame *of* him. *She falleth* him *to fete.* 5524. She falleth at the feet *of* him. *She swore* him. 6543. She swore *to* him. *Hem* and *Hire* are used in the same manner.

HIMSELF, HIMSELVE, HIMSELVEN. See SELF.

HINDEREST, *superl. d.* of HIND, *adv.* SAX. Hindmost. 624.

HINE, *n.* SAX. A servant in husbandry; a hind. 605.

——— *n.* Bal. VII. 35. should probably be *Hiene.* The *gall of an hyena* was used to cure a certain disorder of the eye. Plin. N. H. l. 29, c. 38.

HIPPOCRAS, *pr. n.* Hippocrates. 433. See the note.

HIR, *pron. poss.* SAX. Their. See Essay, &c. p. xlvi.

HIRE, *obl. c.* of SHE. *pron.* SAX. is often put for *Herself.* 139. 4869. and without the usual preposition. 11057. See HIM.

——— *pron. poss.* SAX. Her. See Essay, &c. p. xlvi.

HIRESELF, HIRESELVE, HIRESELVEN. See SELF.

HIRS, *pron. poss.* SAX. Theirs. 7508. See the Essay, &c. n. 23.

HISTORIAL, *adj.* FR. Historical. 12090.

HO, *interj.* FR. commanding a cessation of any action. See the n. on ver. 2535. and I believe *o* in that verse is put for *Ho,* and not for *Oyez.* See the C. L. ver. 270.

HOCHEPOT, *n.* FR. A mixture of various things *shaken* together in the same pot. M. 112, col. 1, l. 10. *Hutspot.* BELG.

HOKER, *n.* SAX. Frowardness. 5717.

HOKERLY, *adv.* Frowardly. P. 159, col. 2, l. 11.

HOLD, *n.* SAX. A fort, or castle. 4927.

——— *v.* SAX. To keep. *To hold in honde.* T. V. 1370. To keep in suspence. T. V. 1614. 1679. To amuse in order to deceive.

——— HOLDEN, *part. pa.* Obliged. 5717. T. iii. 1265.

HOLE, HOL, *adj.* SAX. Entire; whole; sound. 6952. 7613.

HOLLY, *adv.* Entirely; wholly. 5793.

HOLOUR, *n.* SAX. A whoremonger. 5836. P. 166, col. 2, l. 7.

HOLT, *n.* SAX. A grove, or forest. 6 T. iii. 352.

——— for HOLDETH. 9224. 9396.

HOMLY, *adj.* SAX. Domestick. 9066.—Plain; simple. 7423.

HOMLINESSE, *n.* SAX. Domestick management. 8305.—Familiarity. M. 118, col. 1, l. 10.

HONDE, *n.* SAX. A hand. *An honde-brede.* 3809. An hand's breadth. *Withouten honde.* T. iii. 188. Without being pulled by any hand.—HONDEN, *pl.* R. 6653.

HONEST, *adj.* FR. means generally, *according to the French usage,* Creditable; honourable. 246. 13491. Becoming a person of rank. 8302. 9902.

HONESTETEE, HONESTEE, *n.* FR. Virtue. 8298.—Decency. 14630.—Good manners. 6849.

HONG, *v.* SAX. To hang. 12724.

HONT, *n.* SAX. Du. 385. as HUNT.

HONY-SWETE, *adj.* SAX. Sweet as honey. 9270.

HOPE, *v.* SAX. To expect. 4027. See the note.

HOPPESTERES, *n. pl.* SAX. Dancers. 2019. See the note.

HORD, *n.* SAX. Treasure. 13014.—A private place, fit for the keeping of treasure. P. 165, col. 2, l. 16.

Hore, Hoor, *adj.* Sax. Hoary; grey. 7764. 9335.
Horowe, *adj.* Sax. Foul. C. M. 52.
Horribleté, *n.* Fr. Horribleness. R. 7285.
Hors, *n. pl.* Sax. Horses. 5867. 7141. 13563.
Horse, *adj.* Sax. Hoarse. Du. 347.
Horsly, *adj.* 10508. is applied to a horse, as *manly* is to a man.
Hospitalers, *n. pl.* Lat. Religious persons, of both sexes, who attended the sick in hospitals. P. 167, col. 1, l. 59. —Knights Hospitalers, of different orders. R. 6693. See Du Cange, in v. *Hospitalarius.*
Host, *n.* Fr. An army. 14486.
Hostelere, *n.* Fr. An inn-keeper. 4358. 15035.
Hostelrie, *n.* Fr. An inn, or lodging-house. 23.
Hostilements, *n. pl.* Household furniture. Bo. ii. pr. 5.
Hote, *adj.* Sax. Hot. 7018.
Hote, Hoten, *part. pa.* of Hete. Called. 3939.
Hove, *v.* Sax. To hover. T. iii. 1433. T. v. 33.
Hound-fish, *n.* Sax. The dog-fish. 9699.
Houne, *n.* for Hound. T. iv. 210. *Thus said both here and houne,* i. e. hare and hound; all sorts of people.
Houped, *pa. t.* Fr. Hooped, or hollowed. 15406.
Housel, *n.* Sax. The Eucharist. R. 6386.
——— *v.* To administer the sacrament. R. 6437.
——— —*To ben houseled.* To receive the sacrament. P. 170, col. 2, l. 69.
Howve, *n.* Sax. A cap, or hood. See the n. on ver. 3909.
Hulfere, *n.* Sax. Holly. B. K. 129.
Hulstred, *part. pa.* Sax. Hidden. R. 6146.
Humblehede, *n.* Sax. Humble state. 14590.
Humblesse, *n.* Fr. Humility. 4585.
Humbling, *n.* A humming. F. ii. 531. *Hommelen;* Bombilari, bombum edere. Kilian. Hence our *Humble-bee.*
Hunt, *n.* Sax. A huntsman. 1680. 2020.
Hurtle, *v.* Fr. To push. 2618. 4717.
Husbandrie, *n.* Sax. Thrift, œconomical management. 4075.
Husbond-man, *n.* Sax. The master of the family. 7350.
Hust, *adj.* Sax. Silent; whist. Bo. ii. m. 5.
Hylde, *v.* Sax. To pour. Bo. ii. m. 2.
Hylled, *part. pa.* Sax. Hidden. 15061. See Helle.

I.

I, at the beginning of a word, in the common Editt. and even in the MSS. of Chaucer, is often used to express a corruption of the Saxon prepositive particle Ge; which, in this Edit. of the Canterbury Tales, (as has been said before in the Essay, &c. p. xlvi.) is always expressed by *y.* All such words, therefore, occurring in the works of Chaucer not contained in this Edition, should be looked for either under y, or under their second letters.
Jacke of Dover. 4345. See the note.
Jacke fool. 3708. See the n. on ver. 14816.
Jacobin, *pr. n.* A grey-frier. R. 6338.
Jakke Straw, *pr. n.* 15400. The *noise* made by the followers of this rebel, to which our author alludes, he had probably heard himself. It is called by Walsingham, p. 251. *clamor horrendissimus, non similis clamoribus quos edere solent homines, sed qui ultra omnem æstimationem superaret omnes clamores humanos, et maxime posset assimulari ululatibus infernalium incolarum.* Many Flemings *(Flandrenses)* were beheaded by the rebels *cum clamore consueto.* Walsingham, *ibid.*
Jambeux, *n. pl.* Fr. Boots; armour for the legs. 13804.
Jane, *n.* A coin of (*Janua*) Genoa. It is put for any small coin. 8875. 13665.
Jangle, *v.* Fr. To prate; to talk much, or fast. 10534.
——— *n.* Prate; babble. 6989.
Jangler, Janglour, *n.* A prater. 17292, 7.
Janglersse, *n.* A female prater. 6220. 10181.
Jape, *n.* Sax. A trick; a jest. 4341. 16780.
——— *v.* To jest. 13623.—To cheat; to laugh at. 1731.
Jape-worthy, *adj.* Ridiculous. Bo. v. pr. 3.
Japer, *n.* A common jester, or buffoon. P. 161, col. 1, l. 43.
Japerie, *n.* Buffoonerie. P. 161, col. 1, l. 45.
Ich, Iche, *pron.* Sax. I. *So the ich.* 12881. *So the iche.* 16207. So may I prosper.
Idel, *adj.* Sax. Idle; fruitless. *In idel.* 11179. P. 159, col. 2, l. 29. In vain.
Idolastre, *n.* Fr. An idolater. 10172.
Jeopard, *v.* To hazard; to put in danger. T. iv. 1566.
Jeopardie, *n.* Danger. T. ii. 465. T. v. 1529. **Jeopardise.** Du. 666.
Jeremie, *pr. n.* Jeremiah. 12569.
Jerome, *pr. n.* 6256. Our author has made much use of a treatise of St. Jerome, *contra Jovinianum.* See the n. on ver. 9172, and ver. 11679, and the Discourse, &c. n. 19.
Jestes, *n. pl.* T. v. 1510. F. iii. *passim.* as Gestes.
Jewerie, *n.* Fr. A district, inhabited by Jews. 13419.
Jewise, *n.* Judgement; punishment. 1741. 5215. It may have been formed by corruption either of the Lat. *Judicium,* or the Fr. *Justice. Conf. Am.* 157. b. 158.
Ik, *pron.* Sax. I. 3862. 3865. See Ich.
Ilion, *pr. n.* The citadel of Troy. 15362.
Ilke, *adj.* Sax. Same. 64. 3035.
Imaginatif, *adj.* Fr. Suspicious. 11406.
Imped, *part. pa.* Sax. Planted. R. 5137.
Impetren, *pr. t. pl.* Fr. Obtain by prayer. Bo. v. pr. 3.
Impes, *n. pl.* Sax. Shoots of trees. 13962. R. 6293.
Importable, *adj.* Fr. Intolerable. 14520. R. 6902.—Impossible. 9020.
Importune, *adj.* Fr. Troublesome. R. 5632.
Impossible, *adj.* Fr. used as a substantive. 6270. T. iii. 525.
In, *prep.* Sax. Upon. 6350. 14500. 14545. *In with.* 9466. 9818. Within.
Incombrous, *adj.* Fr. Cumbersome. F. ii. 354.
Inconstance, *n.* Fr. Inconstancy. 7540.
Incubus. 6462. See the n. on ver. 6441.
Inde, *adj.* Fr. Azure-coloured. R. 67.
Indigne, *adj.* Fr. Unworthy. 8235.
Ineched, *part. pa.* Sax. Inserted. T. iii. 1335.
Inequal, *adj.* Fr. Unequal. 2273.
Infortunat, *adj.* Lat. Unfortunate. 4722.
Infortune, *n.* Fr. Misfortune. R. 5551.
Ingot, *n.* A mould for casting ingots. 16674. 16701. 16782.
Inhabit, *part. pa.* Fr. Inhabited. C. D. 1400.
Inhilde, *v.* Sax. To pour in. T. iii. 44. See Hylde.
Injure, *n.* Fr. Injury. T. iii. 1020.
Inly, *adv.* Sax. Inwardly, deeply, thoroughly. 6930. R. 397. T. iii. 1612. F. i. 31.
Inne, *prep.* Sax. In. 14002.
——— **In,** *n.* Sax. A house, habitation, lodging. 3547. 5517 13372.
Inned, *part. pa.* Sax. Lodged. 2194.
Innereste, *adj. sup.* Sax. Inmost. Bo. iv. pr. 6.
Innocent, *adj.* Fr. Ignorant. 8150. 10840.
Inseled, *part. pa.* Fr. Attested under seal. C. D. 1014.
Inset, *part. pa.* Sax. Implanted. Bo. ii. pr. 3.
Interminable, *adj.* Fr. Infinite. Bo. v. pr. 6.
Inwitte, *n.* Sax. Understanding. T. L. i. 320. b.
Joce, *pr. n.* 6065. See the note.
Joconde, *adj.* Fr. Joyous; pleasant. 16064.
Jogelour, *n.* Fr. A juggler. 7049.
Joinant, *part. pr.* Fr. Joining. 1062.
Joine, *v.* Fr. To enjoin. R. 2355.
Jolie Robin. The name of a dance. R. 7455. *De la danse le beau Robin.* Orig. 12864.—See T. v. 1174.
Jolif, *adj.* Fr. Jolly; joyful. 3335. 4152.
Jombre, *v.* To jumble. T. ii. 1037.
Jonglerie, *n.* T. v. 755. should rather be *Janglerie;* Idle talk. See Jangle.
Jordanes, *n. pl.* See the n. on ver. 12239.
Jossa, *interj.* 4099. seems to be partly formed from the Fr. *çà!* Come hither!
Jovis, *pr. n.* Jupiter. T. iii. 15. F. i. 219. F. iii. 917.
Journee, *n.* Fr. A day's journey. 2740. C. D. 1945.
——— A day's work. R. 579.
Joustes, *n. pl.* Fr. Justs. C. D. 1967.
Joweles, *n. pl.* Fr. Jewels. R. 5420.
Joye, *v.* Fr. To enjoy. R. 5028.
Ipocras, *n.* Fr. Wine mixed with spices and other ingredients; so named, because it is strained through a woollen cloth, called *the sleeve of Hippocrates.* 9681. See Clarre.
Ire, *n.* Fr. Anger. 7416.

IROUS, *adj.* Passionate. 7596, 7, 8.

ISAUDE, *pr. n.* F. iii. 707. See BELLE ISAUDE. She is called YSEUT by Bernard da Ventador. MS. Crofts. fol. LXVII.

> Tant trag pena d'amor,
> Q'anc *Tristan* l'amador
> Non sofret maior dolor
> Per *Yseut la blonda.*

And so in *Fabliaux*, &c. T. i. p. 242. *Yseut la blonde.* Petrarch calls her *Isotta.* Trionfo d'Amore. iii. 82. A late French writer, in what he has been pleased to style, "*Histoire littéraire des Troubadours,*" (T. ii. p. 323.) having quoted a passage celebrating the love of "*Tristan* à *Isault,*" adds very coolly—*C'est une allusion à* quelque *Roman;* which is just as if a commentator upon Ovid should say of the epistle from *Paris* to *Helen,* that it *alludes to* some *Greek story.*

IT, *pron.* 3 *pers. neut. gend.* SAX. is used instead of *He* and *She.* 3764. 5529. 13144.

ITAILLE, *pr. n.* Italy. 8142.

JUBALTARE, *pr. n.* Gibraltar. 5367.

JUBBE, *n.* A vessel for holding ale, or wine. 3628. 13000.

JUDICUM. 14052. The book of Judges. So *Metamorphoseos* is put for the Metamorphosis of Ovid. 4513. and *Eneidos* for the Æneis of Virgil. 15365.

JUGE, *n.* FR. A judge. 12057. 12190.

JUIL, *pr. n.* The month of July. 10007.

JULIAN, *pr. n.* See the n. on ver. 341.

JUPARDIE, *n.* R. 2666. as JEOPARDIE.

JUPARTIE, *n.* FR. Jeopardie. See the n. on ver. 16211.

JUSTICE, *n.* FR. A judge. 15965.

JUSTINIAN, *pr. n.* R. 6615. The law referred to is in the Code, L. XI. tit. 25. *De mendicantibus validis.*

JUVENAL, *pr. n.* The Roman Satirist. 6774. T. iv. 197.

K.

KALENDER, *n.* LAT. A Calendar. 15136.—A guide, or director. L. W. 542.

KALENDES, *n. pl.* LAT. The first day of the month; the beginning of any thing. T. ii. 7. T. v. 1633.

KAYNARD. See the n. on ver. 5817.

KELE, *v.* SAX. To cool. C. L. 775.

KEMBED, KEMPED, *part. pa.* SAX. Combed. 2291. 2136.

KEMELIN, *n.* SAX. A tub. 3548.

KENELM, *pr. n.* 15116. See the note.

KEPE, *n.* SAX. Care; attention. 4162. 8934.

——— *v.* To take care. 2240. 2962.

KERCHEF, *n.* 6600. a corruption of COVERCHIEF.

KERNELS, *n. pl.* FR. Battlements. R. 4195.

KERS, *n.* SAX. Water-cresses. *Of paramours ne raught he not a kers.* 3754. He cared not a rush for love. CRESSE is used, in the same sense, in T. L. i. 320. and ii. 332. b.

KERVER, *n.* SAX. A carver. 1901.

KESSE, *v.* SAX. To kiss. 8933. R. 2610.

KESTE, *pa. t.* Kissed. 10664.

KETCHE, *v.* T. iii. 1381. as CACCHE.

KEVERE, *v.* FR. To cover. In T. i. 918. it signifies to *recover.*

KICHEL, *n.* SAX. A little cake. 7329. See the note.

KID, KIDDE, *pa. t.* and *part.* of KITHE. Made known; discovered. 9817. T. i. 208. R. 2172.

KIKE, *v.* SAX. To kick. 6523.

KIN, *n.* SAX. Kindred. *By my fader kin.* 9389. 16297. By my father's kindred.

——— *adj.* Of the same nature. 5557.

KIND, *n.* SAX. Nature. 17130. T. i. 238.

KINDLY, *adv.* Naturally. 5994.

KINREDE, *n.* Kindred. M. 113, col. 2, l. 33.

KIRTEL, *n.* SAX. A tunic, or waistcoat. 3321. 11884. In *kirtels* and none other wede. R. 778. *Qui estoient en pure* cottes. Orig. 775.

KITHE, *v.* SAX. To shew; to make known. 5056. 7191. *Ne kithe hire jealousie.* 11060. Nor shew to her any jealousie.

KITHED, *part. pa.* 16622. See KID.

KITTE, *pa. t.* SAX. Cut. 6304.

KNAKKES, *n. pl.* SAX. Trifling tricks. 4049. The word seems to have been formed from the *knacking,* or *snapping,* of the fingers, used by jugglers. See Cotgrave, in v. *Matassiner des mains,* and *Niquet.*—Trifling words. P. 161, col. 1, l. 49.

KNAPPE, *n.* A short sleep; a nap. R. 4005.

KNARRY, *adj.* SAX. Full of *gnarres,* or knots. 1979.

KNAVE, *n.* SAX. A servant; properly, a boy-servant. 2738. 13240.—*A knave-child.* 5135. 8320. A male child.—*This boie knave.* R. 3849. *Ce garçon.* Orig.

KNEDDE, *part. pa.* of KNEDE, *v.* SAX. Kneaded. R. 4811.

KNEEN, KNENE, *n. pl.* SAX. Knees. C. D. 294. 436.

KNET, *part. pa.* R. 2092. as KNIT.

KNIGHT, *n.* SAX. A servant; generally, a servant in war; a soldier. M. 117, col. 2, l. 31. 15851.—A dubbed knight. See his CHARACTER, ver. 43—78.

KNIGHTHODE, *n.* Valour. 14560.

KNIT, *part. pa.* SAX. Joined; bound. 11298.—Agreed. 11542.

KNOBBES, *n. pl.* SAX. Excrescences, in the shape of buds, or buttons. 635. See KNOPPE.

KNOPPE, *n.* SAX. A button. R. 1080.—A rose-bud. R. 1702.

KNOPPED, *part. pa.* Buttoned; fastened. R. 7212.

KNOTTE, *n.* SAX. A knot. In ver. 10715. 10721. it is used, in the sense of *Nœud,* FR. for *the chief point,* or *head* of a matter.

KNOTTELES, *adj.* SAX. Without a knot; without any thing to obstruct or retard the passage. T. V. 769.

KNOWE for KNEE. T. ii. 1202.

KNOWLECHE, *v.* SAX. To acknowledge. M. 118, col. 2, l. 45.

KNOWLECHING, *n.* Knowledge. 16900. R. 4676.

KONNING, *n.* F. iii. 966. as CONNING; Cunning.

KYKE, *v.* SAX. To look stedfastly. 3445. Kijcken. TEUT. *Spectare.* Kilian.

L.

LABBE, *n.* A blab; a great talker. 3509.

LABBING, *part. pr.* Blabbing. 10302.

LACED, *part. pa.* FR. Tied, bound. R. 3178.

LACERT, *n.* FR. "A fleshy muscle; so termed from its having a tail like a lizard. *Cotg.*" 2755.

LACHE, *adj.* FR. Sluggish. Bo. iv. pr. 3.

LACHESSE, *n.* FR. Slackness; negligence. P. 162, col. 2, l. 67.

LAD, LADDE, *pa. t.* of LEDE, *v.* SAX. Led; carried. 7360. 13264.

LAFT, *pa. t.* and *part.* of LEVE, *v.* SAX. Left. 16351. L. W. 168.

LAIE, *n.* T. i. 341. 1002. as LAY.

LAIED, *part. pa.* of LAY, *v.* SAX. *With orfreys* LAIED, i. e. trimmed. R. 1076. So this word is frequently used by Hollinshed, vol. iii. p. 1317. LAID *with gold lace.*—LAID ON *with red silke and gold lace.*—LAID ABOUT *with silver lace.* See COUCHED.

LAINE, *inf. v.* SAX. To lay. R. 184.

LAINERS, *n. pl.* FR. Straps, or thongs. 2506.

LAKE, *n.* 13787. It is difficult to say what sort of cloth is meant. *Laecken,* BELG. signifies both *linen* and *woollen cloth.* Kilian.

LAKKE, *n.* SAX. A fault; a disgraceful action. 10073.—Want. 10145.

LAKKE, *v.* To find fault; to blame. R. 284. 4804.

LAMBEN, *n. pl.* SAX. Lambs. R. 7063.

LANGURE, *v.* FR. To languish. 9741.

LAPIDAIRE. F. iii. 262. A treatise on precious stones, so entitled; probably a French translation of the Latin poem of Marbodus *de gemmis,* which is frequently cited by the name of *Lapidarius.* Fabric. Bibl. Med. Æt. in v. MARBODUS.

LAPPE, *n.* SAX. A skirt, or lappet of a garment. 8461 15480. T. iii. 59. 743.

LARGE, *adj.* FR. Spacious; free. Prodigal. 13361. *At large.* 2290. At liberty. *Til that it was prime large.* 10674. Till prime was far spent.

LARGELY, *adv.* Fully. 1910.

LAS. *n.* FR. A lace. 394.—A snare. 1819. 1853.

LASSE, LAS, *adj. comp.* SAX. Less. 4407. 13047. R. 3045.
LAICHE, *n.* R. 1624. as LAS.
LATERED, *part. pa.* SAX. Delayed. P. 162, col. 2, l. 62.
LATHE, *n.* 4086. A barn. "It is still used in Lincolnshire. *Sk.*" In F. iii. 1050. where the Editt. have *rathe* and *fathe*, the MSS. give the true reading—*lathe*.
LATON, *n.* FR. A kind of mixed metal. 701. of the colour of brass. 11557.
LAUDE, *n.* LAT. Praise. 13385.
LAUDES. 3655. The service performed in the fourth, or last watch of the night. *Dicuntur autem* Laudes, *quod illud officium laudem præcipue sonat divinam, &c.* Du Cange in v. LAUS 2. The same service was often called *Matins*. Idem in v. MATUTINI.
LAVED, *part. pa.* FR. Drawn; spoken of water *taken out of a well*. Bo. iii. m. 12.
LAVENDER, *n.* FR. A washerwoman, or laundress. L. W. 358. In the passage of DANTE, which is here quoted, *Envy* is called,

> LA MERETRICE, *che mai dall' ospizio*
> *Di Cesare non torse gli occhi putti,*
> *Morte comune, e delle corte vizio.*

Inf. xiii. 64.

LAVEROCK, *n.* SAX. A lark. R. 662.
LAUNCEGAY, *n.* A sort of lance. See the n. on ver. 13682.
LAUNCELOT DU LAKE. 15918. An eminent knight of the round table, whose adventures were the subject of a *Romance* begun by *Chrestien de Troyes*, one of the oldest of the Romance-poets, and finished by *Godefrois de Leigni*. See Fauchet. L. ii. c. 10, 11. They have been repeatedly printed in French prose, and make a considerable part of the compilation called "*Mort d'Arthur*." His accomplishments, as a courtier and a man of gallantry, have been alluded to before, ver. 10601. Signor Volpi, in his notes upon Dante, *Inf.* v. 128. has most unaccountably represented *Lancilotto*, as *innamorato di Ginevra, moglie del Re* MARCO. If there be any faith in *history*, Ginevra was the wife of King ARTHUR. The story in Dante, which is the occasion of Signor Volpi's note, is a curious one. It is alluded to by Petrarch, *Trionfo d'Amore*. iii. 82.

> Vedi Ginevra, Isotta, e l' altre amanti,
> E *la coppia d'Arimino*.———

LAUNDE, *n.* FR. A plain not ploughed. 1693.
LAVOURES, *n. pl.* FR. Lavers. 5869.
LAUREAT, *adj.* LAT. Crowned with laurel. 7907. 14614.
LAUREOLE, *n.* FR. Spurge-laurel. 14969.
LAURER, *n.* FR. Laurel. 9340.
LAUS, *adj.* SAX. Loose. 4062. *Laus*. Island. *Solutus*. This is the true original of that termination of adjectives, so frequent in our language, in *les* or *less*. Consuetud. de Beverley. MS. *Harl.* 560. Hujus sacrilegii emenda non erat determinata, sed dicebatur ab Anglis *Botalaus*, i. e. *sine emendâ*. So Chaucer uses *Boteles*, and other words of the same form; as *Detteles, Drinkeles, Gilteles, &c.*
LAWE, *adj.* for Low. R. 5046.
LAXATIF, *n.* FR. A purging medicine. 2758. 14949.
LAY, *n.* SAX. Law; religious profession. 4796. 10332.
LAY, *n.* FR. A species of poem. 9755. 11259. See the Discourse, &c. n. 24.
LAY, *pa. t.* of LIE, or LIGGE. 972. LAYEN. *pl.* 3210.
LAZAR, *n.* FR. A leper. 242.
LECHE, *n.* SAX. A physician. 3902. *Lechecraft*. 2747. The skill of a physician.
——— *v.* To heal. C. D. 852.
LECHEROUS, *adj.* Provoking lecherie. 12483.
LECHOUR, *n.* FR. A leacher. 6953.
LECTORNE, *n.* LAT. A reading-desk. C. L. 1383.
LEDEN, *n.* SAX. Language. 10749. See the note.
LEDGE, *v.* C. L. 1065. as ALLEGE.
LEES, *n.* FR. A leash, by which dogs are held. P. 155, col. 1, l. 3.
——— *adj.* SAX. False. *Withouten lees*. R. 3904. Without lying; truly.
LEFE, *adj.* SAX. Pleasing, agreeable. *Al be him* LOTHE *or* LEFE. 1839. Though it be unpleasing to him, or pleasing. *For* LEFE *ne* LOTHE. 13062. For friend nor enemy. *He turned not—for* LEVE *ne for* LOTHE. P. L. 296.—It sometimes signifies, Pleased. *I n'am not* LEFE *to gabbe*. 3510. I am not pleased to prate; I take no pleasure in prating.
LEFULL, *adj.* Lawful. 5619. 9322.
LEGGE, *v* SAX. To lay. 3935.
——— *v.* FR. To ease. R. 5016. as ALEGE.
LEIE, *v.* SAX. To lay. T. iii. 72.
LEISER, *n.* FR. Leisure. 1190. 9708. Opportunity. 3292.
LEITE, *n.* SAX. Light. *Thonder-leite*. Bo. i. m. 4. Lightning.
LEKE, *n.* SAX. A leek. 3877. It is put for any thing of very small value. 16263. R. 4830.
LEMES, *n. pl.* SAX. Flames. 14936.
LEMMAN, *n.* SAX. A lover, or gallant. 4238. 5337.—A mistress. 14069.
LENDES, *n. pl.* SAX. The loins. 3237.
LENE, *adj.* SAX. Lean. 289. 9727.
——— *v.* SAX. To lend. 613. 3775.—To grant. 7296. 13613.
LENGER, *adv. comp.* SAX. Longer. 14437.
LENTE, *pa. t.* of LENE, 13284.
LENTON, *n.* SAX. The season of Lent. P. 148, col. 2, l. 21.
L'ENVOY, FR. was a sort of postscript, *sent with* poetical compositions, and serving either to recommend them to the attention of some particular person, or to enforce what we call *the moral* of them. The six last Stanzas of the CLERKES TALE are in many Mss. entitled, *L'envoy de Chaucer à les mariz de notre temps*. See also the Stanzas at the end of the *Complaint of the Black Knight*, and of *Chaucer's Dreme*.
LEON, *n.* LAT. A lion. 1600.
LEONINE, *adj.* Belonging to a lion. 14564.
LEOPART, LEPARD, *n.* FR. A leopard. 2188. 14267.
LEOS, *n.* GR. People. 15571, 4.
LEPANDE, *part. pr.* of LEPE, *v.* SAX. Leaping. R. 1928.
LEPE, LEP, for LEPETH, 3 *pers. sing.* 4226. 10285.
——— for LEPED, *pa. t.* 2689. C. D. 2164.
——— *pr. n.* A town in Spain. 12504.
LERE, LERNE, *v.* SAX. To learn. 10002. 13466.—To teach. 16312.
LERED, *pa. t.* and *part.* 577. 13449.
LERE, *n.* SAX. The skin. 13786. See the note.
LESE, *n.* FR. as LEES. *In lustie lese*. T. ii. 752. In Love's leash.
——— *adj.* SAX. as LEES. R. 85093.
——— *v.* SAX. To lose. 11672, 4.
LESETH, 2 *pers. pl. imp. m.* 4439. Lose ye.
LESING, *n.* SAX. A lie; a falsity. 15947. R. 4508. LESINGES, *pl.* 12525.
LEST, LIST, LUST, *n.* SAX. Pleasure. 132. 192. 6215. 11124.
LESTE, LISTE, LUSTE, *v.* To please. It is generally used, as an Impersonal, in the third person only, for *It pleaseth*, or *It pleased*. *Him luste to vide so*. 102. It pleased him t. r. s. *Wel to drink us leste*. 752. It pleased us well t. d. *If you lest*. 830. If it please you. *Me list not play*. 3865. It pleaseth me not to play.
——— *adj.* SAX. *superl. d.* Least. 2200. *At the leste way*. 1123. *At the leste*. 3432. At least.
——— for LAST. T. ii. 1330.
LET, *v.* SAX. To leave; to omit. 1319. To leave; to permit. 1325. *Let thy japes be*. 5824. *Let the sompnour be*. 6871.—To cause. 2978. 5377.—To hinder. T. iii. 726.
LETE, *pr. n.* The river Lethe. F. i. 71.
LETGAME, *n.* SAX. A hinderer of pleasure. T. iii. 528.
LETTE, *n.* Delay; hindrance. 8176.
LETTOWE, *pr. n.* Lithuania. 54.
LETTRED, *adj.* FR. Learned. R. 7691.
LETTRURE, LETTEURE, *n.* FR. Literature. 14414. 16314.
LETTUARIE, *n.* FR. An electuary. 428, 9683.
LEVE, *v.* for LIVE. 7114.
——— *n.* SAX. Desire; inclination. 13952.
——— *adj.* Dear. 3132. See LEFE.
——— *v.* SAX. To believe. 10079.
LEVETH, *imp. m.* 2 *pers. pl.* 3090. *Leveth me*. Believe me. In R. 3519. *Leveth* is misprinted for *Leseth*.

> He *leseth* more than *ye* may doe.

So this verse should be written.

Plus y pert-il *que* vous *ne faictes*. Orig.

In T. iii. 56. *Leve* is misprinted for *Lene;* and also in T. ii. 1212. and T. v. 1749.

LEVELES, *adj.* SAX. Without leave. C. D. 74.

LEVEN, *n.* SAX. Lightning. 5858.

LEVER, *comp. d.* of LEFE. More agreeable. *It were me lever.* 10995. *I hadde lever.* 10037. HIRE *hadde lever.* 5447. See also ver. 16844. 16972.

LEVESELL. See the n. on ver. 4059. though I am by no means satisfied with the explanation there given of this word. The interpretation of it in the *Prompt. Parv.* will not help us much. "LEVECEL BEFORN A WYNDOWE OR OTHER PLACE. *Umbraculum.*" My conjecture with respect to the origin of the proverb, *Good wine needs no bush,* is certainly wrong. That refers to a very old practice of hanging up a bush, or bough, where wine is to be sold. The Italians have the same proverb, *Al buon vino non bisogna frasca.*

LEWED, LEWDE, *adj.* SAX. Ignorant; unlearned. 6928. 12370.—Lascivious. 10023.

LEYE, *v.* SAX. as LEGGE. To lay. R. 4143.—To lay a wager. 16064.

LEYES, *pr. n.* Layas, in Armenia. 58. See the n. on ver. 51.

LEYTE, *n.* SAX. Flame. P. 169, col. 1, l. 21. See LEITE.

LIARD, *pr. n.* belonged originally to a horse of a grey colour. See the n. on ver. 7145.

LICENCIAT, *n.* LAT. 220. seems to signify, that he was *licensed by the Pope* to hear confessions, &c. in all places, independently of the local ordinaries. See R. 6364—6472.

LICHE-WAKE. See the n. on ver. 2960.

LIDE, *pr. n.* Lydia. 14645.

LIEGES, *n. pl.* FR. Subjects. 7943.

LIEN, *pr. t. pl.* of LIE, or LIGGE. 16247.

—— *part. pa.* of LIE, or LIGGE. Lain. P. 170, col. 1, l. 55. P. 172, col. 1, l. 20.

LIES, *n. pl.* FR. Lees of wine, &c. F. iii. 1040.

LIETH, R. 4143. is misprinted for LEYETH.

LIFLY, *adv.* SAX. Like the life. 2089.

LIGEANCE, *n.* FR. Allegiance. 5315.

LIGGE, LIE, *v. neut.* SAX. To lye down. 2207. 13830.

LIGGING, *part. pr.* Lying. 1013.

LIGHT, *v.* SAX. To enlighten. 15539. 13401.—To make light, or pleasant. 10710.

—— *v. neut.* To descend; to alight. 5524. 10483.

LIGNE, *n.* FR. Lineage; lineal descent. T. v. 1480. LIGINE. C. D. 1517. should probably be *Lignee,* to rime to *Compagnee.*

LIGNE ALOES. T. iv. 1137. Lignum aloes; a very bitter drug.

LIKE, LIKEN, *v.* SAX. To compare. 5951. 3. 5.

—— *v.* SAX. To please. 8382. T. i. 432. *If you liketh.* 779. If it pleaseth you. *It liketh hem.* 5679. It pleaseth them.

LIKEROUS, *adj.* SAX. Gluttonous. 12473.—Lascivious. 6048.

LIKING, *part. pr.* Pleasing. R. 868.

—— *n.* Pleasure. 12389.

LIMAILE, *n.* FR. Filings of any metal. 16321.

LIME, *v.* SAX. To smear, as with bird-lime. T. i. 354.

LIMED, *part. pa.* Caught, as with bird-lime. 6516.

—— *part. pa.* FR. Polished, as with a file. F. iii. 34.

LIMER, *n.* FR. *Limier.* A blood-hound. Du. 362. 5.

LIME-ROD. 14694. A twig with bird-lime.

LIMITATION, *n.* LAT. A certain precinct allowed to a Limitour. 6459.

LIMITOUR, *n.* A Fryer licensed to beg within a certain district. 209. 253. 4.

LIMMES, *n. pl.* SAX. Limbs. P. 149, col. 1, l. 45.

LINAGE, *n.* FR. Family. 4270. R. 258.

LINDE, *n.* SAX. The lime-tree. 9087. R. 1385.

LISSE, *n.* SAX. Remission; abatement. 11550.

—— *v. neut.* SAX. To grow easy. R. 3758. 4128.

LISSED, *part. pa.* of LISSE, *v.* SAX. Eased; relieved. 11482.

LISTE, *v.* See LESTE.

LISTENETH, *imp. m. 2 pers. pl.* of LISTEN, *v.* SAX. Hearken ye. 13642.

LISTES, *n. pl* FR. Lists; a place enclosed for combats, &c. See the n. on ver. 1715.

LITARGE, *n.* FR. White lead. 16243.

LITE, *adj* SAX. Little. 1195. P. 162, col. 1, l. 47.

LITH, *n.* SAX. A limb. 14881.

—— for LIETH. 3653. 10349.

LITHE, *adj.* SAX. Soft; flexible. Du. 953. F. i. 119.

—— *v.* SAX. To soften. T. iv. 754.

LITHER, *adj.* SAX. Wicked. C. N. 14. In the Editt. it is *Lithy.* LUTHER *and quede.* R. G. 414. See QUADE.

LITHERLY, *adv.* SAX. Very ill. 3299.

LITLING, *adj.* SAX. Very little. F. iii. 133.

LIVAND, *part. pr.* SAX. Living. C. D. 1628.

LIVE, *n.* SAX. Life. *On live.* 3041. 5622. In life; A'live. *Lives creature.* 2397. 8779. Living creature. *Lives body.* F. ii. 555. Living body.

LODEMANAGE. 405. } See the note on ver. 405. and the statute 3 Geo. I. c. 13. where *Load-manage* is used repeatedly in the sense of *Pilotage.*
LODESTERRE. 2061. }

LODESMEN, *n. pl.* SAX. Pilots. L. W. 1486.

LOFT, *adv.* SAX. *On loft.* 4697. On high; A-loft.

LOGE, *n.* FR. A lodge; habitation. 14829.

LOGGED, *part. pa.* FR. Lodged. 15004.

LOGGING, *n.* Lodging. 15001.

LOKE, *v.* SAX. To see; *to look upon.* Bo. iv. pr. 6. v. pr. 3.

LOKEN, LOKE, *part. pa.* of LOKE, *v.* SAX. Locked. 14831. R. 2092. Shut close. *Conf. Am.* 29. *His one eye anon was* LOCKE.

LOLLER, *n.* A Lollard. See the n. on ver. 12923. and ver. 12914.

LOLLIUS, *pr. n.* of a writer, from whom Chaucer professes to have translated his poem of *Troilus and Cresseide.* See the note on P. 172, col. 2, l. 23. I have not been able to find any further account of him.

LONDE, *n.* SAX. Land. 4806. 5323.

LONDENOYS. A Londoner; one born in London. T. L. i. 325.

LONE, *n.* SAX. A loan; any thing lent. 7443.

LONG, *v.* SAX. To belong. 2280. *Longing for his art.* 3309. Belonging to his art. 10353.—To desire. L. W. 2275.

—— 16390. See ALONG.

LOOS, LOS, *n.* FR. Praise. 16836. M. 117, col. 2, l. 1. LOSES, *pl.* F. iii. 598.

LORD, *n.* SAX. A title of honour, given to Monks, as well as to other persons of superior rank. 172. 13930.—In ver. 830. *Lordes* is used in the sense of *Lordings.*

LORDINGS, *n. pl.* Sirs; Masters. 763. 790. A diminutive of *Lords.*

LORDSHIP, *n.* SAX. Supreme power. 1627.

LORE, *n.* SAX. Knowledge. 8664.—Doctrine. 529.—Advice 3527.

LOREL, *n.* SAX. A good-for-nothing fellow. 5855. Bo. i. pr. 4. where it is the translation of *perditissimum.* Skinner supposes it to be derived from the LAT. *Lurco;* and in the *Promptorium Parvulorum,* "LOSEL, or LOREL, or LURDEN," is rendered "*Lurco.*" But *Lurco,* I apprehend, signifies only a *glutton,* which falls very short of our idea of *a lorel;* and besides I do not believe that the word was ever sufficiently common in Latin to give rise to a derivative in English. One of Skinner's friends deduces it with much more probability from the BELG. (rather SAX.) *Loren;* Lost; *Perditus.*

LORNE, *part. pa.* of LESE, *v.* SAX. Lost. 8947. Undone. 10943. 13959.

LOS, *n.* SAX. LOSS. 16477. T. iv. 27.

LOSED, *part. pa.* SAX. Loosed. R. 4511.

—— *part. pa.* FR. Praised. T. L. i. 325.

LOSENGE, *n.* FR. A quadrilateral figure, of equal sides but unequal angles, in which the Arms of women are usually painted. R. 893. In F. iii. 227. *Losynges* seems to signify small figures of the same form in the fret-work of a crown.

LOSENGEOUR, *n.* FR. A flatterer. 15332.

LOTERY, *n.* R. 6339. In the Orig. *Compaigne.* A private companion, or bed-fellow. In P. P. 14. the *concubines* of priests are called their *Lotebies.* Perhaps it may be derived from the SAX. *Loute;* to lurk.

LOTH, *adj.* SAX. Disagreeable; odious. 3393.

LOTHER, *comp. d.* More hateful. L. W. 191.

LOTHEST, *superl. d.* Most unwilling. 11625.

LOTHLY, *adj.* Loathsome. 6682.

LOVE-DAYES. See the n. on ver. 260. and add T. L. i. 319. "Maked I not a *Love-daye* betwene God and mankynde, and chese a mayde to be *nompere,* to put the quarell at ende?"

LOVE-DRINKE, *n.* SAX. A drink to excite love. 6336.
LOVE-LONGING, *n.* SAX. Desire of love. 3349. 3679.
LOVESOME, *adj.* SAX. Lovely. T. v. 465.
LOUGH, *pa. t.* of LAUGH, *v.* SAX. Laughed. 6254. 12410.
LOUKE. 4413. See the note. In P. P. 20. *Wrong* is called *a wicked luske;* and I learn from Cotgrave, that *luske* is a synonymous word to *lowt, lorel,* &c. so that perhaps *Louke* may be still another term for *an idle, good-for-nothing fellow.* See Cotg. in v. *Luske,* ENG. and in v. *Loricard, Falourdin.* FR.
LOURE, *v. neut.* SAX. To look discontented. R. 7099.
LOURING, *part. pa.* 6848.
LOUTE, *v.* SAX. To bow. 14168. R. 4384.—To lurk. 15654.
LOW, *n.* for LAW. C. D. 319.
LOWLYHEDE, *n.* SAX. Humility. B. K. 315.
LUCAN, *pr. n.* The Roman poet. 14637.
LUCE, *n.* LAT. The fish, called a pike. 352.
LUCINA, *pr. n.* The Moon. 11357.
LULLED, *pa. t.* of LULL, *v.* SAX. Invited to sleep. 8429.
LUMBARDES, *n. pl.* Bankers; Remitters of money. 13297.
LUNARIE, *pr. n.* of a herb; moon-wort. 16268.
LURE, *n.* FR. A device used by falconers for calling their hawks. 6922. 17021.
——— *v.* FR. To bring to the lure. 5997.
LUSSHEBURGHES. See the n. on ver. 13968.
LUST, *n.* See LEST.
LUSTE, *v.* See LESTE.
LUSTYHEDE, *n.* SAX. Pleasure, mirth. 17223. L. W. 1528.
LUXURIE, *n.* FR. Leacherie. 5345.
LYNIAN, *pr. n.* 7910. See the note. A learned correspondent, to whom I am obliged for other useful hints, has suggested to me, that Fabricius, upon the authority of Ghilini, has placed the death of *Joannes Lignanus* in 1383. Bibl. Med. Æt. in v. This furnishes an additional reason for believing that the Canterbury Tales were composed, or at least collected into a body, after that period.

M.

MACE, *n.* FR. A club. 2126.
MACHABE, *pr. n.* The books of the Maccabees. 14497. 14573.
MACROBES, *pr. n.* R. 7. MACROBIUS. 15129. Du. 284. A. F. 111. The author of the Commentary on the *Somnium Scipionis* of Cicero.
MADDE, *v.* SAX. To be mad. 3559. R. 1072.
MADRIAN. 13998. See the note. I have found since that the French have a Saint called *Materne.* But Mr. Steevens, with much more probability, supposes, that the *precious body,* by which the Host swears, was that of St. *Mathurin.* See his story in the *Golden Legende,* Edit. 1527. by Winkin de Worde, 151. b. "Than toke they *the precious body* and enoynted it with moche reverence; and when they had layd it in the erth, on the morowe they came to the sepulture and founde *the holy body* above the erth nygh unto the same sepulture, and than were they all abashed and wyst not what to do." It seems, the knightes, who had brought him out of France, had promised that, if he died on his journey, he should be sent back and buried "where as they had taken him;" and therefore his body would not stay in the ground, till it was deposited, according to promise, in France; where it afterwards worked many miracles.
MAFEIE, FR. *Ma foy;* by my faith. T. iii. 52.
MAGICIEN, *n.* FR. A magician. 11553.
MAGIKE, *n.* FR. Magick. 11607. *Magike naturel.* 418. See the note.
MAHOUND, *pr. n.* Mahomet. 4644. See Du Cange, in v.
MAILLE, *n.* FR. A coat of mail. 9078.
MAINTE, *part. pa.* B. K. 230. as MEINT.
MAINTENANCE, *n.* FR. Behaviour. Du. 834.
MAISONDEWE, FR. *Maison-dieu;* a hospital. R. 5619.
MAISTER, *n.* FR. A skilful artist; a master. 11514. 11532. *Maister-strete.* 2904. The chief street. *Maister-temple.* L. W. 1014. The chief temple. *Maister-tour.* 10540. The principal tower.
MAISTERFUL, *adj.* Imperious. T. ii. 756.
MAISTERIE, MAISTRIE, *n.* FR. Skill; skilful management. 3363. 6400.—Power; superiority. 6622. 9048. 11076.

Love wol not be constreined by maistrie.
Whan maistrie cometh, the God of love anon
Beteth his winges, and, farewel! he is gon.

I cite these elegant lines, as I omitted to observe before, that Spenser has inserted them in his *Faery Queen,* B. 2. C. 1. St. 25. with very little alteration, and certainly without any improvement.

Ne may love be compel'd my mastery;
For, soon as mastery comes, sweet love anone
Taketh his nimble wings, and soon away is gone.

Amaistrie. 16528. A masterly operation; *Un coup de maitre.*——*For the maistrie.* 165. See the note.
MAISTRESSE, *n.* FR. Mistress, governess. 12040.
MAISTRISE, *n.* FR. Masterly workmanship. R. 4172.
MAKE, *n.* SAX. A fellow; a mate. 2558.—A husband. 5667. 8716. A wife. 9175. 9696. MAKE or METCHE. *Compar.* Prompt. Parv.
——— *v.* SAX. To compose, or make verses. L. W. 69. 364. *To solace him sometime, as I do whan I* MAKE. P. P. 60.—*To make a* man's *berde;* To cheat him. See the n. on ver. 4094.
MAKED, *part. pa.* Made. 2526.
MAKE. Bo. iv. m. 7. *Why* MAKE *ye your backes?* We should read—*nake,* i. e. make naked. *Cur inertes terga nudatis?* Orig.
MAKELES, *adj.* SAX. Peerless; without a fellow. T. i. 172.
MAKING, *n.* Poetry. L. W. 74. MAKINGES, *pl.* Poetical compositions. L. W. 413. *And thou medlest with* MAKINGS. P. P. 60.
MALAPERT, *adj.* Pert, forward. C. L. 737. And so we should read in T. iii. 87. with the MSS. J. K. instead of *in all apert.* The word seems to be evidently of French original, though I do not recollect to have seen it used by any French writer. *Appert. adj.* FR. signifies *Expert,* &c. Cotgrave.
MALE, *n.* FR. A budget, or portmanteau. 3117. 12854.
MALEFICE, *n.* FR. Enchantment. P. 153, col. 2, l. 47.
MALE-TALENT, *n.* FR. Ill will. R. 274. 330.
MALISON, *n.* FR. Malediction, curse. 16713. P. 156, col. 1, l. 50. *I gyve it my* MALISOUN. P. L. 318.
MALT, *pa. t.* of MELT, *v.* SAX. Melted. T. i. 583.
MALVESIE, *pr. n.* Malmsey-wine. See the n. on ver. 9681.
MALURE, *n.* FR. Misfortune. C. D. 599.
MANACE, *n.* FR. A threat. 2005.
——— *v.* To threaten. 7998. 9626.
MANACING, *n.* Threatening. 2037.
MANCIPLE, *n.* An officer, who has the care of purchasing victuals for an Inn of Court. See his CHARACTER, ver. 569—588. The name is probably derived from the LAT. *Manceps,* which signified particularly *the superintendant of a public bakehouse,* and from thence a *baker* in general. See Du Cange, in v. MANCEPS. 2. The office still subsists in several Colleges as well as Inns of Court.
MANDEMENT, *n.* FR. Mandate. 6928.
MANERE, *n.* FR. Carriage, behaviour. 140. 10860.—Kind, or sort. *A manere Latin.* 4939. A kind of Latin. *Swiche a maner love-drinke.* 6335. Such a sort of love-potion. *Swiche maner rime.* 6709.
MANGONEL, *n.* FR. An engine used to batter walls. R. 6279.
MANIE, *n.* FR. GR. Madness. 1376.
MANNISH, *adj.* SAX. Human; proper to the human species. M. 112, col. 1, l. 25.—Masculine; proper to man, as distinguished from woman. T. i. 284. In this last sense, when applied to a woman, it is a strong term of reproach. 5202.
MANOR, *n.* FR. Dwelling. Du. 1004.
MANSUETE, *adj.* FR. Gentle. T. v. 194.
MANTELET, *n.* FR. A short mantle. 2165.
MARCIAN, *pr. n.* Martianus Capella. 9606. F. ii. 477.
——— *adj.* Martial; under the influence of Mars. 6192.
MAREIS, *n.* FR. A marsh. 6552.
MARGARITE, *n.* FR. A pearl. T. L. i. 315. b.
MARIE, MARV, *n.* SAX. Marrow. 12476. *Mariebones.* 382. Marrow-bones.
MARKET-BETER. 3934. See the note. But I am now more inclined to believe, that this word is to be understood in a sense similar to that in which the French phrases, *Battre les rues*—and *Batteur de paves* are used. *Battre*

les rues; To revel, jet, or swagger up and down the streets a'nights. *Batteur de paves;* A jetter abroad in the streets.—A pavement beater. See Cotgrave, in v. *Bateur. Batre. Pavé.* So that "*He was a market-beter atte full*" may mean perhaps;—*He was used to swagger up and down the market, when it was fullest:* a circumstance, which suits very well with the rest of his character.—MARKET DASCHAR. *Circumforaneus.* Prompt. Parv.

MARKIS, *n.* FR. A marquis. 7940.

——— for MARKISES, *gen. ca. sing.* 8870. In the same manner *Peneus* is put for *Peneuses.* 2066. *Theseus* for *Theseuses.* 2201. 2697. *Venus* for *Venuses.* 2274. 10586. *Ceres* for *Cereses.* 10139. *Melibeus* for *Melibeuses.* 13902. and in prose, M. 119, col. 1, l. 50. Perhaps it might have been proper to add a mark of *Apocope* to the words so abbreviated. As to the present method of expressing the genitive cases of nouns ending in *s*, by adding another *s*, with a mark of *Syncope*, as *Peneus's, Theseus's, Venus's*, &c. it seems absurd, whether the addition be intended to be pronounced, or not. In the first case, the *e* should not be cut out; in the second, the *s* is quite superfluous. But the absurdity of this practice is most striking, when the genitives of *monosyllable* nouns are thus written; *an* ox's *horns; an* ass's *ears;* a fish's *tail;* St. James's *park;* notwithstanding that the *e*, which is thus directed to be cut out, is constantly and necessarily to be pronounced, as if the several words were written at length; *oxes, asses, fishes, Jameses.*

MARKISESSE, *n.* FR. The wife of a Marquis. 8159. 8270.

MARTE, *pr. n.* Mars. 2023.

MARTIRE, *n.* FR. Martyrdom; torment. R. 2547.

——— *v.* FR. To torment. 1564.

MARY, MARIE, *pr. n.* A vulgar oath; *By* Mary. 13322. 16539.

MASE, *n.* A wild fancy. 15099. T. v. 468.

——— *v. neut.* To doubt; to be confounded. 10261.

MASEDNESSE, *n.* Astonishment; confusion. 8937.

MASELIN, *n.* Rather *Mazerin.* 13781. A drinking cup. See Du Cange, in v. MAZER.

MATE, *part. pa.* of MATE, *v.* FR. Dejected; struck dead. 957. R. 1739. *So feble and* mate. *Conf. Am.* 127. b.

MATIRE for MATERE, *n.* FR. Matter. T. iv. 818.

MAUGRE, MALGRÉ, FR. In spite of. *Maugre all thy might.* 1609. *Maugre thin eyen.* 5897. *Maugre hire hed.* 6469. P. 169, col. 2, l. 17.—The original of this expression appears more plainly in the following passages. *I drede thou canst me grete maugre.* R. 4399.

> *Car je cuide, que me scavez*
> *Mal gré.* Orig. 4118.

Malgre his. R. 2386. 5953. With his ill will; against his will; *Mal gré lui.*

MAVIS, *n.* SAX. A thrush. R. 619.

——— R. 5590. is probably a mistake for MUIS, *n. pl.* FR. The Orig. has *Cent* muys *de froment.* 5197. The Paris *Muid* contains something more than five quarters English.

MAUMET, *n.* An idol. P. 163, col. 2, l. 31.

MAUMETRIE, *n.* The religion of Mahomet. 4656.—Idolatrie. P. 163, col. 2, l. 34.

MAWE, *n.* SAX. The stomach. 12930.

MAY, *v.* SAX. To be able, *physically.* 2314. 3045. 8. *morally.* 739. 2355. 6. See MOWE.

MAY, *n.* SAX. A virgin. 5271. *Of Mary, moder and* MAY. P. L. 235. 307.—A young woman. T. v. 1719.

MAYDENHED, *n.* SAX. Virginity. 2331.

MAXIMIAN, *pr. n.* C. L. 798. The author of VI Elegies, which have been frequently printed under the name of Gallus. He is said by Fabricius (Bibl. Lat. T. i. p. 297. Ed. Patav.) to have lived under the Emperour Anastasius, q. I. or II.? A translation, or rather abridgement, of these Elegies, in English verse, is in MS. Harl. 2253.

MEANELICHE, *adj.* SAX. Moderate. Bo. i. pr. 6. *Mediocribus.* Orig.

MEBLES, *n. pl.* FR. Moveable goods. 9188. 16008.

MEDE, *n.* SAX. Reward. 3330. P. 164, col. 2, l. 65.—A meadow. 89.

——— METHE, METH, *n.* BARB. LAT. Mead; a liquor made of honey. 2281. 3378. 3261.

MEDLE, *v.* FR. To mix. P. 149, col. 1, l. 1.

MEDLEE, *adj.* Of a mixed stuff, or colour. 330.

MEINIE, *n.* FR. Household attendants. 7627. 7738.—An army. 14348. 17177. *Hurlewaynes meyne.* Contin. of Canterb. Tales, l. 8. This obscure phrase, I think, may be understood to relate to a particular set of ghostly apparitions, which were used to run about the country at night, and were called in French *La mesgnie de Hellequin* or *Herlequin.* The fullest account that I have seen of them is in "*L'histoire de Richard sans paour, Duc de Normandie, qui fut fils de Robert le Diable.*" In one of his rides he meets with three black Knights, whom he engages. "Et quand les Chevaliers veirent le jeu mal party pour eux ils monterent à cheval et s'enfuyrent;—et Richard—chevaucha apres eux; et ainsi qu'il chevauchoit il apperceut une dance de gens noirs qui s'entretenoyent. Adonc luy souvint *de la mesgnie de Hellequin,* dont il avoit autres foys ouy parler." The title of the next chapter (4.) is "*Cy divise de la mesgnie de Hellequin et qui il estoit.*" He is there said to have been a knight, who, having spent all his substance in the wars of Charles Martel against the Saracens, lived afterwards by pillage. "Adonc il avint qu'il mourut et fut en danger d'estre damne, mais Dieu luy fit pardon, pource que il avoit bataille contre les Sarrazins et exaulce la foy. Si fut condamne de Dieu que pour un tems determine luy et ceux de son lignage feroient penitence et yroient toute la nuit parmy la terre, pour leurs penitences faire et endurer plusieurs maux et calamitez." The belief of such apparitions was certainly of great antiquity in Normandy, as they are mentioned by Ordericus Vitalis, under the title of *familia Herlechini,* in a most extraordinary story related by him, L. viii. p. 695. ann. 1091. And I suspect that in a passage quoted by Du Cange, in v. HERLININI, from *Petr. Blesens* Ep. 14. we should read *Herlikini* instead of *Herlinini.*

Gervase of Tilbery, who wrote in 1211, mentions another set of apparitions, which were called *familia Arturi.* Ot. Imper. Dec. ii. c. 12. "In sylvis Britanniæ majoris aut minoris consimilia contigisse referuntur, narrantibus nemorum custodibus, quos *forestarios*—vulgus nominat, se alternis diebus circa horam meridianam, et in primo noctium conticinio sub plenilunio lunâ lucente, septisime videre militum copiam venantium et canum et cornuum strepitum, qui sciscitantibus se *de societate et familiâ Arturi* esse affirmant." He had just said that Arthur, not long before, had been seen in a palace, "*miro opere constructo,*" in a most delicious valley in the neighbourhood of Mount Ætna, where he had resided ever since the time of his supposed death, "*vulneribus quotannis recrudescentibus.*"

MEINT, *part. pa.* of MENGE, *v.* SAX. Mixed, mingled. R. 2296.

MEKE, *adj.* SAX. Meek, humble. 8017.

——— *v.* To become meek. R. 3541. 3584.

MELES, *n. pl.* SAX. Meals; dinners, &c. Du. 612.

MELE-TIDE, *n.* SAX. Dinner-time. T. ii. 1556.

MELLE, *v.* FR. To meddle. C. D. 536.

——— *n.* for MILLE. 3921.

MEMORIE, *n.* FR. Remembrance. *To be drawen to memorie.* 3114. To be recorded.

> And for *to drawe in to memorye*
> Her names bothe and her historye.
> *Conf. Am.* f. 76.

——— *v.* To remember. 10118.

MENDIANTS, *n. pl.* FR. Fryers of the Begging orders. 7488. See the note.

MENE, *v.* SAX. To mean; to intend. 2065. 2213.

——— *n.* FR. *Moyen.* A mean, or instrument. 2645. T. iii. 255. Where the Orig. has *mezzano;* a procurer.

MENES, *pl.* 7064. 3375.

——— *adj.* Middle. 7027. 17322. But see the note on the *latter* verse.

MENIVERE, *n.* FR. A sort of furr. R. 227. See the n. on ver. 193.

MERCENRIKE, *pr. n.* The kingdom of Mercia. 15118.

MERCIA, *pr. n.* F. iii. 139. *Marsyas* is probably meant; but our Poet, I know not upon what authority, has turned him into a female.

MERCIABLE, *adj.* FR. Merciful. 13618.

Meritorie, *adj.* Fr. Meritorious. P. 165, col. 2, l. 47.
Merke, *n.* Sax. A mark; an image. 11192. *All the merke of Adam.* 6278. All the images of Adam; all mankind.
——— *adj.* Sax. Dark. R. 5339.
Merlion, *n.* Fr. *Emerillon.* A merlin; a sort of hawk. A. F. 339.
Mervaille, *n.* Fr. Wonder, marvel. 10974.
Mery, *adj.* Sax. Merry. 804.—Pleasant. 14972.
Mes. R. 3462. *At gode mes* should probably be *At godeness.* The Orig. has *en bon point.* See Godeness.
Mese, *n.* for Messe. C. D. 2116.
Mesel, *n.* Fr. A leper. P. 160, col. 2, l. 19.
Meselrie, *n.* Fr. Leprosie. P. 160, col. 2, l. 24.
Message, *n.* Fr. A messenger. 8614. 8823.
Messagerie, *pr. n.* A fictitious attendant in the Temple of Venus. A. F. 228. Boccace calls her *Ruffiania.* Theseida. b. vii.
Messe, *n.* Fr. The service of the Mass. 9768.
Meste, *adj.* Sax. *superl. d.* 8006. as Moste.
Mesurable, *adj.* Fr. Moderate. 437. 10676.
Mesure, *n.* Fr. Moderation. 11981.
Metamorphoseos. 4513. Metamorphoseose. C. L. 1260. Ovid's Metamorphosis. See Judicum.
Mete, *adj.* Sax. Fitting; convenient. 1633.
——— *n.* Sax. Meat. 1617. *During the metes space.* 5434. During the time of eating.
Mete-borde, *n.* Sax. An eating-table. T. L. ii. 326. b.
Metely, *adj.* Proportionable. R. 822.
Mete, *v.* Sax. To meet. 12627.—To dream. T. iii. 1350.
Mette, **Met**, *pa. t.* Dreamed. 15089. 15118. *I mette.* 6159. *Me mette.* 14900. 4. I dreamed.
Metriciens, *n. pl.* Writers in verse. C. L. 30.
Mevable, *adj.* Fr. Moveable. R. 4736.
Mewe, *n.* Fr. A cage for hawks, while they *mue*, or change their feathers. 10957.—A cage, in general, or any sort of confinement. R. 4778. T. iii. 603. *In mewe.* T. i. 382. In secret.
Mewet, *adj.* Fr. Mute. *In mewet.* C. L. 148. Dumbly, speaking inwardly.
Micher, *n.* A thief. R. 6541. *Lierres.* Orig. 12008. Mychyn of pryvely stelyn smale thynge. *Surripio.* Prompt. Parv.
Might, *pa. t.* of May, *v.* Sax. Was able. 301. 1519. Mighten, *pl.* 7985.
——— *part. pa.* T. iii. 655. *If godely had he might.* If he had *been able* with propriety.
——— *n.* Sax. Power; strength. 1152. 1858.
Milksop, *n.* An effeminate fellow. 13916.
Milne-stones, *n. pl.* Sax. Mill-stones. T. ii. 1384.
Minde, *n.* Sax. Remembrance. 1908. *Conf. Am.* 148. *As the bokes maken* minde.
Mine, *v.* Fr. To penetrate. T. ii. 627.
Ministralles, *n. pl.* Fr. Minstrels. 10392.
Ministres, *n. pl.* Fr. Officers of justice. 15049. 15064. Ministers. C. D. 2130. Minstrels.
Minoresse, *n.* R. 149. A nun, under the rule of St. Clare. Du Cange, in v. Minorissa. It is not clear however why Chaucer has likened *Hate* to a Sister of this order. His original gave him no authority.
Minour, *n.* Fr. A miner. 2467.
Minstralcie, *n.* Fr. Musick. 2199. 10582.—Musical instruments. 17216.
Mirrour, *n.* Fr. A looking-glass. 10446.
Mirthelles, *adj.* Sax. Without mirth. A. F. 592.
Mis, *adv.* Ill; amiss. 16467. R. 3243. T. iv. 1267. It is often to be supplied to a second verb, having been expressed in composition with a former. *If that I mis-speke or say.* 3141. *That hire misdoth or saith.* 13928. *There is nothing missaide nor do.* Du. 528.
——— *n.* A wrong. 17226.
Mis-accompted, *part. pa.* Misreckoned. T. v. 1184.
Misaventure, *n.* Misfortune. 6916.
Mis-avise, *v.* To advise wrongly. 5812.
Mis-boden, *part. pa.* of Mis-bede. Injured. 911.
Mis-borne, *part. pa.* of Mis-bere. Misbehaved. M. 120, col. 2, l. 19.
Mischance, *n.* Fr. Misfortune. *With mischance.* 6916. 17142. See With.
Mischefe, *n.* Fr. Misfortune. R. 6741.
Miscoveting, *n.* R. 196. should probably be Miscompting. *Mescompter.* Orig.
Mis-departe, *v.* To distribute wrongly. 4527.
Misericorde, *n.* Fr. Mercy; pity. 7492.
Mis-ese, *n.* Uneasiness. P. 150, col. 1, l. 10.
Mis-foryave, *pa. t.* of Mis-foryeve. Mis-gave. T. iv. 1426.
Mis-gied, *part. pa.* of Mis-gie. Misguided. 14451.
Mis-gon, **Mis-go**, *part. pa.* of Mis-go. Gone wrong. 4216. 4253.
Mis-happing, *part. pr.* Falling amiss. R. 5543.
Mis-lede, *v.* To conduct amiss. T. iv. 48.
Mis-lived, *part. pa.* Having lived to a bad purpose. T. iv. 350.
Mis-metre, *v.* To spoil the metre of verses, by writing or reading them ill. T. v. 1795.
Mis-sate, *pa. t.* of Mis-sit. Misbecame. R. 1194.
Mis-sayde, *part. pa.* of Mis-saye. Ill spoken of. R. 126.
Mis-sayer, *n.* An evil speaker. R. 2231.
Misse, *v.* Sax. To fail. T. iii. 1630.
Misse-metre, *v.* See Mis-metre.
Mistake, *v.* To take a wrong part; to transgress. R. 1540. *Mesprendre.* Orig.
Mistere, *n.* Fr. Trade; occupation. 615.—Condition of life. 1342. *What mistere men ye ben.* 1712. What kind of men ye are.—Need. R. 5614. 6078.
Misthede, *n.* Sax. Darkness. C. M. 71.
Mistily, *adv.* Sax. Darkly. 16862.
Mistrist, *v.* for Mistrust. 12303.
Mis-waie, *n.* A wrong way. R. 4766.
Mis-went, *part. pa.* of Mis wende. Gone amiss. R. 7280.
Mis-write, *v.* To write wrong. T. v. 1794.
Mitaine, *n.* Fr. A glove. 12307, 8.
Mitche, *n.* Fr. A manchet; a loaf of fine bread. R. 5585.
Mite, *n.* Sax. A small worm. 6142. 16166.
Mixen, *n.* Sax. A dunghill. P. 167, col. 2, l. 67.
Mo for **Me**. 8915. See the note.
——— for More, *adj. comp.* 546. 810. 1937.—*adv. comp.* 1354. 2073.
Mochel, **Moche**, *adj.* Sax. Great, *in quantity.* 2354. 7593. *in number.* 6586. 6855. *in degree.* 496.—*adv.* Much, greatly. 1118. 2852.
Moder, **Modre**, *n.* Sax. Mother. 10139. 10291.—The *Matrix*, or principal plate of the Astrolabe. *Ast.*
Moison, *n.* Fr. Harvest; growth. R. 1677.
Moist, **Moisty**, *adj.* Fr. New. 459. 12249. 17009. See the n. on ver. 459.
Mokel, *n.* Du. 454. 861. may perhaps signifie *size, magnitude;* as *Michel* seems to be used in that sense in P. P. 89. b. *Of one* michel *and might.*
Molestie, *n.* Fr. Trouble. Bo. iii. pr. 9.
Molte, *pa. t.* of Melte, *v.* Sax. Melted. F. ii. 414.—*part. pa.* T. v. 10.
Monche, *v.* To chew. T. i. 915.
Mone, *n.* Sax. The Moon. 9759.—Lamentation. 5076. 11232.
Moneste, *v.* Fr. To admonish. R. 3579.
Moniours, *n. pl.* Fr. Coiners. R. 6811. In the Original it is *Faulx Monnoyeurs.*
Monstre, *n.* Fr. A monster, or prodigy. 11656.—A pattern. Du. 912.
Mood, *n.* Sax. Anger. 1762.
Morcels, *n. pl.* Fr. Morsels. R. 6179.
More, *adj. comp.* Sax. Greater, *in quantity.* 705. 785. *in number.* 10192. *in degree.* 1758. 6516.—*adv. comp.* 1309. 2746. It is usually joined to adjectives and adverbs to express the comparative degree. 6023. 7551. 10786.
Mormal, *n.* See the n. on ver. 388.
Morter, *n.* Fr. A sort of wax-light. T. iv. 1245.
Mortifie, *v.* Fr. To kill (speaking of *Quicksilver*). 16594.
Mortrewes, *n.* See the n. on ver. 386.
Morwe, *n.* Sax. The morning. 2493. *A'morwe.* 824. 6173. In the morning. 1623. 2491. In the morning of the *following* day.—*To-morwe*, I believe, always means *the following day.* 782. 1612. 2241. 2404. and it includes the whole day. *To-morwe at night.* 3593.
Morwening, *n.* Sax. The morning. 4232. 15308. Morwenynges, *pl.* 6457.
Mosel, *n.* Fr. The muzzle; mouth of a beast. 2153.

MOSTE, *adj. superl.* SAX. Greatest. *in quantity.* 305. 897. *in number.* 10675. *in degree.* 2200. 10614.—*adv. superl.* 563. 2409. It is usually joined to adjectives and adverbs to express the superlative degree. 2205. 9425.

——— *v.* SAX. Must. 734. 7. MOSTEN, *pl.* 6024.

MOTE, *v.* SAX. Must. 232. 1647. 8.—May. 834. 4175. MOTEN, *pl.* 10630. 2.

——— *n.* SAX. An atom. 6450. T. iii. 1609.

MOTHES, *n. pl.* SAX. Moths. 6142.

MOTIF, *n.* FR. A motive, incitement. 5048. 9365.

MOUGHT, *pa. t.* of MOWE, *v.* SAX. Might.

MOULE, *v.* SAX. To grow mouldy. 4452. MOULED, *part. pa.* 3868.

MOUN for MOWEN, *pr. t. pl.* of MOWE, *v.* SAX. May. 12868. 13160.

MOUNTANCE, *n.* FR. Amount; in value. 1572.—in quantity. 12797. *Not full the* mountance *of a mile.* Conf. Am. 187.

MOURDANT, *n.* FR. The tongue of a buckle. R. 1094.

MOWE, *v.* SAX. May; to be able. MOWEN, *pl.* 13967. 16149.—It is sometimes used in the *inf. m.* M. 115, col. 1, l. 5. *Which thou shalt not mowe suffre.* Which thou shalt not *be able* to endure.—*To mowen suche a knight done live or die.* T. ii. 1594. To *be able* to make such a knight to live or die. —*She should not con ne mow attaine.* C. D. 150. She should not know nor *be able* to attain.

MOWE, *n.* FR. A distortion of the mouth. T. iv. 7. F. iii. 716. *What do I than but laugh and* make a mowe? Lydg. *Trag.* 137.

MOWING, *n.* Ability. Bo. iv. pr. 4. In the following passage it seems to be used as a GERUND. *That shrewes weren dispoiled of mowing to don yvel.* Ibid.

MUCH, MUCHEL. See MOCHE.

MUCKRE, *v.* SAX. To heap. T. iii. 1381.

MUE, *v.* FR. To change. T. ii. 1258.

MUET, *adj.* FR. Dumb, mute. T. v. 194.

MULLOK, *n.* SAX. Dung; rubbish. 3871. 16408.

MULTIPLICATION, *n.* FR. The art of making gold and silver. 16317.

MULTIPLIE, *v.* FR. To make gold and silver. 16303.

MUSARD, *n.* FR. A muser, or dreamer. R. 3256. 4034.

MUSE, *v.* FR. To gaze. R. 1592.

MYSELF, MYSELVE, MYSELVEN. See SELF.

N.

NA for NO. 4174. See the n. on ver. 4021.

N'ADDE for NE HADDE; Had not. 10212.

NAILE, *n.* SAX. A nail. 6351. *By nailes.* 12222. *By Goddes nailes.* 12585. an oath. See the n. on ver. 12583.

NAKERES, *n. pl.* FR. See the n. on ver. 2513.

NALE, *n.* SAX. An ale-house. 6931. See the note. But I am now less inclined to adopt Skinner's explanation of this word, because I observe that *Ale* alone is commonly put for an *Ale-house*, and I cannot find that *Nale* is ever used, except where it follows the preposition *Atte.* In the passage quoted from P. P. 32 b. the *Cotton* MS. Vesp. B. xvi. has *at the ale.* And so in P. P. 26 b. With idle tales *at the ale.*—Robert of Brunne's translation of *Manuel des pechés.* MS. *Bodl.* 2313. fol. 1.

> In gamys, in festys, and *at the ale*—
> fol. 38. Or yf thou leddest any man *to the ale.*

I suspect therefore that *Nale*, in those few passages in which it is found, should be considered as merely a corruption, which has arisen from the mispronunciation and consequent miswriting of *atte nale* for *atten ale.* See the n. on ver. 12542. A similar corruption seems to have taken place in the name of that celebrated personage in our law, Mr. *John a-noke*, whose original appellation, I believe, was John *atten oke*, as that of his constant antagonist was John *atte stile.* Sim. *atte stile* is a name in P. P. 23 b. and there are many others of the same form; as, *Atte-cliff, Atte-ley, Atte-well, Atte-wood*, &c. That the letter *n* is apt to pass from the end of one word to the beginning of another, we have an instance in *Newt*, which has certainly been formed by corruption from *An ewt*, or *eft*; and perhaps *Nedder*, *n.* SAX. may have been formed in the same way from *An adder.* The word in the Teutonic is *Adder*, as we write it now, without the initial *n.* The same corruptions have happened in other languages. See the notes of Signor *Redi* upon his *Bacco in Toscana*, p. 133. 4. 5. 182. 3.

N'AM for NE AM; Am not. 5730.

NAME, *pa. t.* of NIME, *v.* SAX. Took. 16765.

NAPPE, *v.* SAX. To sleep. 16958. See KNAP.

NARCOTIKES, *n. pl.* FR. GR. Drugs causing sleep. 1474. L. W. 2659.

NARWE, *adj.* SAX. Close, narrow. 3224. 14828. *When they hem narwe avise.* 9862. When they closely consider their conduct.

NAS for NE WAS; Was not. 1450. 1651.

NASO, *pr. n.* L. W. 928. 2218. P. Ovidius Naso. See OVIDE.

NAT, *adv.* SAX. Not. 5819. 6551.

NATAL, *adj.* LAT. Presiding over nativity. T. iii. 150.

NATHELESSE, NATHELES, *adv.* SAX. Not the less; nevertheless. 2475. 3606.

NATION, *n.* FR. 4701. Nation.—Family. 6650.

NAUGHT, NOUGHT, *n.* SAX. Nothing. 758. 770.

——— *adv.* Not; not at all. 2070. 4820. It may more properly perhaps be considered as a noun used adverbially. See NOTHING.

NAY, *adv.* SAX. 8297. It seems to be used sometimes as a noun. *It is no nay.* 8692. 9015. It cannot be denied.

——— *v.* To denie. P. 170, col. 2, l. 20.

NE, *adv.* SAX. Not. 9356. 10070. *Ne had he ben holpen.* 10980. Had he not been helped.

——— *conj.* SAX. Nor. 970, l. 8847. 11795.

NECE, *n.* FR. A niece.—A cousin. 13030. 13055.

NECESSARIE, *adj.* FR. Necessary. T. iv. 1021.

NEDE, *n.* SAX. Need; necessity. 4523.

——— *v.* is generally used as an Impersonal. *It nedeth thee nought teche.* 3599. *Nedeth hem no drede.* 419. *Neded no more to hem to go ne ride.* 9489.

NEDEFUL, *adj.* Distrest, indigent. 4532.

NEDELY, *adv.* Necessarily. 6550.

NEDES, NEDE, *adv.* Necessarily. It is usually joined with *must.* 1171. 11475. 17157.

NEDDER, *n.* SAX. An adder. 9060. NEDERS, *pl.* L. W. 689.

NEIGHE, *adj.* SAX. Nigh. 3392.

——— *v.* To approach; to come near. R. 1775. 2003.

NEKKE, *n.* SAX. The neck. 5859. *Nekkebone.* 6488.

NEMPNE, *v.* SAX. To name. 10632.

NER, *adv.* SAX. Near. 10315. 12900.

NERE, *comp. d.* Nigher. *Never the nere.* 16189. Never the nigher. *Nere and nere.* 13450. Nigher and nigher. *Ferre ne nere.* 1852. Later nor earlier.

N'ERE for NE WERE; Were not. 17222. *N'ere it.* 1692. Were it not. *Ne're the frendship.* 16830.

NERFE, *n.* FR. Nerve; sinew. T. ii. 642.

NESHE, *adj.* SAX. Soft; tender. C. L. 1092. NESCH and *hard.* P. L. 242 300.

NETE, *n.* SAX. Neat-cattle. 599.

NETHER, *adj. comp.* SAX. Lower. 3850.

NETTLE IN, DOCK OUT. T. iv. 461. See RAKET.

NEVEN, *v.* SAX. To name. 8485. 16289.

NEVEW, *n.* FR. A nephew.—A grandson. L. W. 2648.

NEWE, *adj.* SAX. New; fresh. 459.

——— *adv.* Newly. 7879. *Newe and newe.* T. iii. 116. Again and again. *All newe.* 9700. *Of newe.* 8814. Newly; lately. *All newe.* 13308. Anew; afresh.

——— *v.* To renew. T. iii. 306.

NEWED, *part. pa.* Renewed. M. 120, col. 1, l. 6.

NEWEFANGEL, *adj.* Desirous of new things. 10932. 17142.

NEWEFANGELNESSE, *n.* Inconstancy. 10924.

NEXTE, *superl. d.* Nighest. It generally signifies the nighest *following*; but sometimes the nighest *preceding.* F. iii. 685.

N'HATH for NE HATH; Hath not. 925.

NICE, *adj.* FR. Foolish. 5508. 6520.

NICETEE, *n.* Folly. 4044. 17101. *Do his nicetee.* 5994. So the French use *Faire folie.*

NIFLES, *n. pl.* Trifles. 7342.

NIGARD, *n.* A stingy fellow. 5915.

NIGARDIE, *n.* Stingyness. 13102.

NIGHTERTALE. 97. Night-time. See the note.

NIGHT-SPEL, *n.* SAX. A night-charm. See the n. on ver 3438.

N'ILL for NE WILL; Will not. 5724. 5762.
N'IS for NE IS; Is not. 976. 1679.
N'ISTE for NE WISTE; Knew not. *sing.* 11340. 3414. N'ISTEN for NE WISTEN; Knew not. *pl.* 10948.
NOBLEDEST, *pa. t. 2 pers. sing.* of NOBLE, *v.* FR. Ennobledst. 15508.
NOBLESSE, *n.* FR. Dignity, splendour. 8344. 8658.
NOBLEY, *n.* 8704. 10391. as NOBLESSE.
NOCKED, *part. pa.* Notched. R. 942.
NOIE, *n.* FR. Hurt; trouble. 3772.
—— *v.* FR. To hurt; to trouble. R. 4416.
NOISE, *v.* FR. To make a noise. Bo. iii. m. 6.
N'OLDE for NE WOLDE; Would not. 3159. 3168.
NOMBRE, *n.* FR. Number. 718.
NOMEN, NOME, *part. pa.* of NIME, *v.* SAX. Taken. T. v. 190. 514. L. W. 1016.
NOMPERE, *n.* An arbitrator. T. L. i. 319. See the passage quoted above in v. LOVEDAIE. The sense of this word is established by the *Prompt. Parv.* "NOWMPER or OWMPER. *Arbiter. Sequester.*" If the etymology of it were as clear, we might be able to determine which of the two methods of writing it is the best. Custom has long declared for the latter. The modern word is *umpire;* and in P. P. 25 b. the Editt. read *an umper;* but the *Cotton* MS. Vesp. B. xvi. has—*a numper.* I cannot find that any such word is used, in the same sense, in any other of the Gothic or Romance languages. It has been supposed by some to be a corruption of *un pere,* FR. which I can hardly believe; and perhaps the reader will be as backward to admit of a derivation of it from the FR. *Nonpair;* An *odd,* or *third* person; which *an arbitrator* generally is. This however is the most probable etymology that has occurred to me; and I see that the compiler of the Statutes for the University of Oxford (whoever he was) had the same idea, for he expresses the word *umpire,* in *his* Latin, by *Impar.* Tit. xv. §. 14. *Index,* IMPAR, *aut Arbitrator, in quâcunque causâ electus.*
NON, *adj.* SAX. Not one; none. 656. 682.
—— *adv.* FR. Not. 13011. *Absent or non.* 8311. *Whether ye wol or non.* 11090.
NONE, *n.* FR. The ninth hour of the natural day; Nine o'clock in the morning; the hour of dinner. 9767. T. v. 1114. 22, 30.
NONES. *For the nones.* See the n. on ver. 381. and add, if necessary, the following instances, T. i. 562. ii. 1381. iv. 428. L. W 295. 1068. 1114. [There seems to be now no doubt that the original form was the Saxon *for than anes.* See Price's note on Warton's *Hist. of Engl. Poet.* ii. 496, and Sir F. Madden's *Gloss.* to *Syr Gawayne,* &c.]
NONNE, *n.* FR. A nun. 118.
NORICE, *n.* FR. A nurse. 5881. Bo. ii. pr. 4. In other passages, Bo. i. pr. 3. iii. pr. 9. it is printed by mistake, I suppose, for NORIE, *n.* A foster-child. *Alumnus.*
NORTELRIE, *n.* Nurture; education. 3965.
NOSETHIRLES, *n. pl.* SAX. Nostrils. 559. P. 150, col. 2, l. 38.
N'OT for NE WOT; Know not. 286. 3664.
NOTABILITEE, *n.* FR. A thing worthy of observation. 15215.
NOTE, *n.* SAX. Need; business. 4066.
—— *n.* FR. A musical note. *To cry by note.* T. iv. 583. To cry aloud, in a high tone.
NOTEMUGE, *n.* Nutmeg. 13693. R. 1361.
NOTES, *n. pl.* SAX. Nuts. R. 1377.
NOT-HED; A head like a nut. See the n. on ver. 109.
NOTHER, *conj.* SAX. Nor, neither. 8796. 9951.
N'OTHER, *adj.* SAX. for NE OTHER. *Neither n'other.* L. W. 192. Nor one nor other. *He n'is in neither n'other habite.* Bo. v. m. 3. *Neutro est habitu.* Orig.
NOTHING, *adv.* SAX. Not; not at all. 1756. 8251.
NOUCHES, *n. pl.* 8258. See the note. It is probable, I think, that *Nouche* is the true word, and that *Ouche* has been introduced by a corruption, the reverse of that which has been taken notice of in NALE. See Du Cange, in v. *Nochia,* and *Nusca;* and Schilter, *Gloss. Teut.* in v. *Nuosci;* from whence it appears that *Nuschin,* TEUT. signifies *Fibula;* a clasp, or buckle As these were some of the most useful instruments of dress, they were probably some of the first that were *ornamented with jewels;* by which means the name by degrees may have been extended, so as to include several other *sorts of jewels.* The same thing may have happened in the case of the word BROCHE (see above); which indeed seems, originally, to have been a *French* expression for *Nouche.*
NOVELRIES, *n. pl.* FR. Novelties. F. ii. 178.
NOUGHT, *n. & adv.* SAX. See NAUGHT.
NOUTHE, *adv.* SAX. Now. 464. T. i. 986. See the n. on ver. 464.
NOW, *adv.* SAX. *Now and now.* 10744. Once and again. *Now adayes.* 9040. 16864. In these days.
NOWEL, *n.* FR. Christmas. See the n. on ver. 11567.
NOYSAUNCE, *n.* FR. Offence; trespass C. D. 255.

O.

O for HO. 2535. See HO.
O, *adj.* for ON; One. 740. 5555. In the curious old Ballad on the battle of Lewes (*Ant. Poet.* v. ii. p. 4.) l. 10. *oferlyng* should be written, I believe, *o ferlyng,* i. e. one farthing.
OBEYSANCE, *n.* FR. Obedience. 8378. OBEYSING. R. 3380.
OBEYSANT, *part. pr.* FR. Obedient. 7942. OBEYSING. L. W. 1264.
OBSEQUIES, *n. pl.* FR. Funeral rites. 995.
OBSERVANCE, *n.* FR. Respect. 10830.
OBSERVE, *v.* FR. To respect; to pay regard to. 13560.
OCCIDENT, *n.* FR. The West. 4717.
OCTAVIEN, *pr. n.* Du. 368. I do not suppose that Augustus is meant, but rather the fabulous emperour, who is a subject of a Romance entitled "*Octavian imperator.*" MS. Cotton. Calig. A. ii. See Percy's Catalogue, n. 18. and the passage quoted from MS. Reg. 17. C. viii. in the n. on ver. 13775. The same Octavian, I apprehend, was celebrated in a piece of Arras hangings, which made part of the furniture of Henry V. and is thus described in the Inventory. *Rot. Parl.* 2. Hen. VI. Item I *autre pece d arras D or q comence en l estorie* "Le Octavion Roy de Rome."
OCY, OCY. C. N. 124. The nightingale's note.
OERTHROW for OVERTHROW, *part. pa.* SAX. Overthrown. C. D. 1151.
OETUS, *pr. n.* Æetes. L. W. 1436.
OF, *adv.* SAX. Off. 552. 784. 2678.
OFFENDED, *part. pa.* FR. Hurt. 2396.
OFFENSIOUN, *n.* Offence; damage. 2418.
OFFERTORIE, *n.* FR. A part of the Mass. 712.
OFFRING, *n.* FR. Offering at Mass. 452. P. 155, col. 1, l. 63.
OFT, OFTE, *adv.* SAX. Often. OFTENSITH; Oftentimes. 1879. 8109.
OINEMENT, *n.* FR. Ointment. 633.
OLIFAUNT, *n.* FR. Elephant. 13739. See the note, and *R. de la Rose.* 18696. OLIPHANT *sur sa haute eschine,* &c.
OLIVERES, *n. pl* FR. Olive-trees. 14042. R. 1314.
OMER, *pr. n.* Homer. T. i. 146. F. iii. 376.
ON, *prep.* SAX. In. *On live.* 3041. In life; Alive. *On twelve.* 7549. In twelve. *On hunting.* 1689. *On hawking.* 13667. See A. *prep.*—Upon. *On to see.* 3247. To look upon. See the note; and add L. W. 2414. Lycurgus daughter, fairer *on to sene*—So this line is written in MS. Bodl.
—— *adj.* SAX. One. *After on.* 343. 1783. Alike. *They were at on.* 4195. They were agreed. See R. 5817. T. iii. 566. *Ever in on.* 1773. 3878. Continually. *I mine on.* C. D. 1019. I single; I by myself. *And thus I went widewher walking* MINE ONE. P. P. 40 b. *Non saw but* HE ONE. P. L. 44. *All* HIM ONE. Conf. Am. 175.
ONDE, *n.* SAX. Zeal; malice. R. 148. *Ny the and* ONDE. P. L. 249.
ONED, *part. pa.* SAX. Made one, united. 7550. P. 150, col. 1, l. 62.
ONES, *pl.* of ON. 12630. *We three ben alle ones.* We three are all one.
—— *adv.* SAX. Once. *At ones.* 767. At once; at the same time. 3470.
ONHED, *n.* SAX. Unity. T. L. ii. 339.
ONLY, *adv.* SAX. *Al only.* 13385. M. 115, col. 1, l. 10. Solely.
ONY, *adj.* SAX. Any. 2410.
OPEN-ERS, *n.* SAX. The fruit of the Medlar-tree. 3969.

OPEN-HEDED, *adj.* Bare-headed. 6228.
OPIE, *n.* FR. Opium. 1474.
OPPRESSE, *v.* FR. To ravish. 11723. OPPRESSED, *part. pa.* 11697.
OPPRESSION, *n.* Rape. 6471. L. W. 1868.
OR, *adv.* SAX. Er, before. 275. 1157.
ORATORIE, *n.* FR. A chapple. 1907. A closet. 6276.
ORDAL, *n.* SAX. Judicial trial. T. iii. 1048. See Kilian. in v. *Oor-deel*, and Hickes. *Dissert. Epist.* p. 149. It is possible however that Chaucer may have used this word in its more confined sense, for *a trial by fire*, or *water*, without considering whether such trials were practised at Troy.
ORDE, *n.* SAX. A point. L. W. 645.
ORDERED, *part. pa.* Ordained, in holy orders. P. 164, col. 2, l. 13.
ORDERS FOUR, 210. The four orders of Mendicant Friers.
ORDINANCE, *n.* FR. Orderly disposition. 8837. 11215.
ORDINAT, *part. pa.* LAT. Orderly; regular. 9160.
ORE, *n.* SAX. Grace; favour. 3724. See the note.
OREWELL, *pr. n.* A sea-port in Essex. 279.
ORFRAYS, *n.* FR. Gold-embroidery. R. 562. 869. See Du Cange, in v. *Aurifrigia*.
ORIENT, *n.* FR. The east. 14320.
ORIGENES, *pr. n.* In the list of Chaucer's works in L. W. ver. 427. he says of himself, that

> "He made also, gon is a grete while,
> *Origenes upon the Maudeleine.*" ——

meaning, I suppose, a translation, into prose or verse, of the Homily *de Marid Magdalend*, which has been commonly, though falsely, attributed to Origen. v. Opp. Origenis. T. ii. p. 291. Ed. Paris. 1604. I cannot believe that the Poem, entitled "*The Lamentation of Marie Magdaleine*," which is in all the editions of Chaucer, is really that work of his. It can hardly be considered as a translation, or even imitation, of the Homily; and the composition, in every respect, is infinitely meaner than the worst of his genuine pieces.
ORISONT, *n.* FR. The horizon. 9671.
ORLOGE, *n.* FR. A clock, or dial. 14860.
ORPIMENT, *pr. n.* A mineral so called. 16291.
OTHER, *adj.* SAX. *Alter.* LAT. The other of two. 1134. 1137. 1277. OTHERS. *gen. ca.* 2736.
—— *adj.* SAX. *Alius.* LAT. 463. 1218.
—— *conj.* SAX. Or, either. 1714. 1814. 5556.
OUCHE, *n.* 6325. F. iii. 260. See NOUCHE.
OVER, *prep.* SAX. Above. 2045. *Over all.* In every case; on every side. 249. 5846. 8924.
—— *adj.* SAX. Upper. 133.
OVERREST, *superl. d.* Uppermost. 292. 16101.
OVER-GRET, *adj.* SAX. Too great. 16116.
OVER-LADDE, *part. pa.* Overborn. 13917. *Do not the people oppresse, nor* OVERLEDE. Lydg. *Trag.* 104.
OVER-LIVE, *v.* SAX. To out-live. 6842.
OVER MERILY, *adv.* SAX. Too merrily. C. L. 406.
OVER-MOCHE, *adj.* SAX. Too great. C. L. 384.
OVER-NOME, *part. pa.* of OVER-NIME, *v.* SAX. Overtaken. 2802.
OVER-SPRADDE, *pa. t.* SAX. Over-spread. 2873. T. ii. 769.
OVERTE, *adj.* FR. Open. F. ii. 210.
OVERTHREW, *pa. t.* of OVERTHROW, *v. neut.* SAX. Fell down. C. D 663.
OVERTHROWING, *part. pr.* SAX. Falling headlong. *By overthrowing way.* Bo. i. m. 6. *Præcipiti viâ.* Orig. *And therefore clepeth Cassiodore poverte the moder of ruine*, that is to say, *the moder of overthrowing or falling doun.* M. 116, col. 1, l. 62.
OVER-THWART, *adv.* SAX. Across. 1993. Du. 863.—Over against. T. iii. 686.
OVER-TIMELICHE, *adv.* SAX. Too early. Bo. i. m. 1.
OUGHT, *n.* SAX. Opihr. Any thing. 5158. 8471. *adv.* 3047. See AUGHT. The difference has arisen merely from the different usages of writing *A* or *O* for *One*.
—— *pa. t.* of OWE. 4331. L. W. 589. 1607.
OUGHTEN, OUGHTE, *pl.* M. 118, col. 2, l. 31.—From hence, as it seems, has been formed a new verb *Ought*, which is very commonly used in the *present tense*, for *Owe*, in both numbers. 3053. 20400. 2. 14687. M. 108, col. i. l. 38.
Ought is also used as an *Impers.* in the *pr.* and *pa. t.* *Wel ought us werke.* 15482. Well behoveth it us to work. *Hem oughte have gret repentance.* M. 118, col. 2, l. 20. It behoved them to have g. r.
OVIDE, *pr. n.* 4474. 6534. 9999. M. 107, col. 1, l. 8. Our author seems to have been well acquainted with the best part of Ovid's works. Most of the histories in his *Legende of good women* are taken from the *Epistolæ Heroidum*, or the *Metamorphoses*. That of *Lucrece* shews that he had read the *Fasti*.
OUNDING, *n.* FR. Waving; imitating waves. P. 155, col. 2, l. 29.
OURES, *pr. poss.* SAX. Ours. 12720. 13203. See the Essay, &c. n. 29.
OUT, *interj.* SAX. Away! 3823. 10240.
—— *adv.* SAX. *Out and out.* T. ii. 739. Throughout.
OUTHERS, *n.* LAT. BARB. Outcry. 2014. *And born to London brigge full hie* OUTHERS. P. L. 339.
OUTRAGE, *n.* FR. Violence. 2014.
OUTRAIE, *v.* FR. To fly out; to be outrageous. 8512.
OUT-REDE, *v.* SAX. To surpass in counsel. 2451.
OUTRELY, *adv.* FR. Utterly. 12783.
OUT-RENNE, *v.* SAX. To out-run. 2451.
OUT-STRAUGHT, *pa. t.* of OUT-STRETCH, *v.* SAX. Stretched out. R. 1515.
OUT-TAKEN, *part. pa.* Taken out; excepted. OUT-TAKEN *Crist on loft.* 4697. Christ in heaven being excepted. OUT-TAKE *Carleon, that was in Arthure tyme.* P. L. 332.
OWE, *v.* SAX. Debeo. 3091. OWEN, *pl.* 7688. M. 115, col. 2, l. 3.
OWEN, OWNE, *part. pa.* 8380. 9664. 13128.
OWHERE, *adv.* SAX. Anywhere. 655.
OWNDIE, *adj.* FR. Waving. F. iii. 296.
OXENFORDE, *pr. n.* Oxford. 3329.
OYSE, *pr. n.* A river in Picardie. F. iii. 838.

P.

PACE, *v.* FR. To pass away. 8968. 10808.—To surpass. 576
PAGE, *n.* FR. A boy-child. 3970.—A boy-servant. 12975. L. W. 2035.
PAIE, *n.* FR. Liking; satisfaction. R. 5938.
—— *v.* FR. To please; to satisfie. R. 3599.—To pay. 13139.
PAIDE, *part. pa.* Pleased. 6767. C. D. 426.—Payed. 13319, 29.
PAILLET, *n.* FR. A couch (properly of straw). T. iii. 230.
PAINDEMAINE. 13655 See the note.
PAIRE, *v.* FR. To impair. R. 6103. *If I speke ought* TO PAIRE *her loos*, i. e. to impair their credit or reputation. So this line is written in Editt. 1542. and MS. Hunter.
PALAMEDES, *pr. n.* B. K. 331. Not the son of Nauplius, one of the Grecian commanders at the war of Troy, but a knight of the Round table, called PALOMIDES in "*Mort d' Arthur*;" the unsuccessful rival of Tristan for the love of *la belle Isoude*. See *Mort d' Arthur*, B. ii. which seems to be compiled chiefly from the *Roman de Tristan*.
PALASINS, *n. pl.* FR. R. 6862. *Ladies Palasins*; Ladies of the court. In the Orig. *Palatines*. See Du Cange, in v. PALATINI.
PALATIE, *pr. n.* See the n. on ver. 65.
PALE, *n.* A perpendicular stripe, in Heraldry. F. iii. 738.
—— *v.* FR. To make pale. Bo. ii. m. 3.
PALEIS, *n.* FR. A palace. 2201. 10374.
PALFREIS, *n. pl.* FR. Horses for the road. 2497. where *Stedes* are horses for battle. *Ne large palfrey, esy for the nones.* L. W. 1114.
PALING, *n.* FR. Imitating pales. P. 155, col. 2, l. 29.
PALLADION, *n.* GR. The image of Pallas at Troy. T. i. 153
PALLED, *part. pa.* FR. Made pale. 17004.
PALMERES, *n. pl.* See the n. on ver. 13.
PALMERIE, *pr. n.* Palmyra in Syria. 14253.
PAMPHILUS, *pr. n.* 11422. See the note.
PAMPRED, *part. pa.* Pampered; made plump. C. L. 17 See *Jun. Etymol.* who derives it from the FR. *Pampre*; a vine-branch, full of leaves.
PAN, *pr. n.* The heathen deity. Du. 512.
—— *n.* SAX. The skull; the head. 1167. 13958.
PANTER, *n.* FR. A net. R. 1621. L. W. 131.

Papelard, *n.* Fr. A hypocrite. R. 7233.

Papelardie, *n.* Fr. Hypocrisie. R. 6706.

Paper-white, *adj.* White as paper. L. W. 1196.

Par, *prep.* Fr. *Par amour.* 1157. With love. See the note. *Par compagnie.* 3837. For company. *Par chance.* 12540. By chance. *Par cuere.* R. 4796. By heart. *Memoriter.* So this line should be written.

Parabolis, *n. pl.* Fr. Parables; the Proverbs of Solomon. 6361.

Parage, *n.* Fr. Kindred. 5832.

Paraille, *n.* Fr. Apparel. 6143.

Paramour, **Paramours**, *n.* Fr. Love; gallantry. 3354. 3754, 6. 13772.—A lover, of either sex. 6036. 6954. See the n. on ver. 1157.

Peraventure, *adv.* Fr. Haply; by chance. 6475.

Paraunter, corruption of *Peraventure.* Du. 556. 779.

Parcæ, *n. pl.* Lat. The Fates. T. v. 3.

Parcel-mele, *adv.* By parcels, or parts. P. 170, col. 1, l. 61.

Parde, **Pardieux.** 7257. 9110. T. ii. 759. A common Fr. oath, which most of the personages in Chaucer express very frequently in English, with as little ceremony as the Greeks used their νη Δία, and with as little meaning too. See ver. 1812. 4024. 4033. 6168. 7432.

Pardoner, *n.* Fr. A seller of pardons or indulgences. See his Character, ver. 671—716. See also the n. on ver. 710. and P. P. 2.

Parements, *n. pl.* Fr. Ornamental furniture, or clothes. See the n. on ver. 10583.

Parentele, *n.* Fr. Kindred. P. 167, col. 2, l. 53.

Parfay, Fr. *Par foy.* By my faith. 3681.

Parfel R. 6228. as Parfay.

Parfit, *adj.* Fr. Perfect. 72. 5697.

Parfitly, *adv.* Perfectly. 5693.

Parfourme, *v.* Fr. To perform. 7843. 9926.

Parishens, *n. pl.* Fr. Parishioners. 484.

Paritorie, *n.* Fr. Lat. The herb *Parietaria*, or *Pellitory of the wall.* 16049.

Parlement, *n.* Fr. An assembly for consultation. 2972. T. iv. 211.—A consultation. R. 7358.

Parten, *inf. m.* Fr. To take part. 9504. L. W. 465.

Partie, *n.* Fr. A part. 3010. 4437.—A party, *in a dispute.* 2859.

Parvis, *n.* Fr. A portico before a church. Du Cange, in v. *Paradisus*, 1. It appears from R. 7158. Orig. 12530. that books were commonly sold *Au parvis devant Notre Dame* at Paris. At London, *the Parvis* was frequented by Serjeants at Law. See ver. 312. and Fortescue *de laud. leg. Ang.* c. li. *Post meridiem curiæ non tenentur; sed placitantes tunc se divertunt* ad Pervisum *et alibi consulentes* cum servientibus ad Legem *et aliis consiliariis suis.* There is a difference of opinion where *the Parvis* at London, to which the Lawyers resorted, was situated. Somner supposes it to have been in Old Palace-yard, before Westminster-hall. Gloss. in x Script. v. *Triforium.* But others, with more probability, think it was what Dugdale calls *the Pervyse of Paules.* See the notes upon Fortescue, *loc. cit.* When the Serjeants had dined in any of the Inns of Court, St. Paul's lay much more conveniently for an afternoon consultation than Westminster-hall.

Pas, *n.* Fr. A foot-pace. See the n. on ver. 827. and T. ii. 627. *His horse*—On which he rode *a pas ful softely.*

Pass, *v.* Fr. To surpass; to excell. 450. L. W. 1125.—To judge; to pass sentence. 3091. T. iii. 1288. L. W. 162.

Passant, **Passing**, *part. pr.* Excelling. 2109. 16062.

Patren, *inf. m.* To pray; properly, to repeat the *Pater noster.* R. 7195. 6794.

Pavade, *n.* 3927. See the note.

Paumes, *n. pl.* Fr. The palms of the hands. T. iii. 1120.

Pax. *To kisse the Pax.* P. 155, col. 1, l. 63. For an account of this ceremony, see Du Cange, in v.

Payen, *adj.* Fr. Pagan. 2372.

Payenes, *n. pl.* Heathens. 4962.

Paysaunce, *n.* C. D. 1673. "Pausing or stopping, Gloss. *Ur.*" q?

Pecunial, *adj.* Pecuniary; paid in money. 6896.

Pees, *n.* Fr. Peace. 2319. When used as an *interjection*, 6420. 6432. it signifies the same as *Hold thy pees.* 2670 Be silent.

Peine, *n.* Fr. Penalty. *Up peine of deth.* 5304. See Up.—Grief; torment. 1391. 2385.—Labour. 11042.

——— *v.* Fr. To torture; to put to pain. 1748. *She peinea hire.* 139. 4740. She took great pains.

Peise, *v.* Fr. To poize; to weigh. T. iii. 1413.

Pell, *n.* F. iii. 220. "A house; a cell. *Sp.* and *Sk. f.* a palace. Gloss. *Ur.*" q?

Pellet, *n.* Fr. *Pelotte.* A ball. F. iii. 553.

Penance, *n.* Fr. Repentance. P. 148, col. 1, l. 15.—Pains to be undergone by way of satisfaction for sin. 223 5411.—Pain; sorrow. 4758. 5294. 11050.

Penant, *n.* Fr. A person doing penance. 13940.

Pencell, *n.* Fr. *Pennoncel.* A small streamer. T. v. 1043.

Penible, *adj.* Fr. Industrious; pains-taking. 7428. 8590.

Penitencer, *n.* Fr. A priest, who enjoins penance in extraordinary cases. P. 170, col. 1, l. 68.

Penmark, *pr. n.* A place in Bretagne. See the n. on ver. 11113.

Penner, *n.* 9753. A pen-case. In the inventory of the goods of Henry V. *Rot. Parl.* 2 H. 6. n. 15. m. 13. is the following article: "*Un penner' et i ynkhorn d' arg' dorrez.*" And again, m. 29. "*i pennere et i corne covert du velvet bloy.*"

Penon, *n.* Fr. A streamer, or ensign. 980.

Pens, *n. pl.* Sax. Pennies. 12310. 12664.

Pensell, *n.* R. 6280. as Pencell.

Pensifeher, *n.* Pensiveness. B. K. 102.

Peper, *n.* Lat. Pepper. 16230. *To breue peper.* R. 6028. seems to be an expression for the preparation of a hot, pungent liquour, which should burn the throats of the drinkers. In the Orig. it is—*Dames les brasseront tel poivre.* 11514.

Peple, *n.* Fr. People. 2532, 6.

Peplish, *adj.* Vulgar. T. iv. 1677.

Perche, *n.* Fr. A pearch for birds. 14890.

Percel, *adv.* B. K. 225. r. *Parcel.* Ed. 1542. By parcels, or parts.

Perde. F. ii. 332. as Parde.

Pere, *v.* To appear. C. L. 55.

——— *n.* Fr. A peer, an equal. 4024. 10990.

Peregal, *adj.* Equal. T. v. 840.

Peregrine, *adj.* Fr. Wandering. 10742. See the note.

Pereles, *adj.* Without an equal. B. K. 347.

Perjenete, *n.* A young pear. See the n. on ver. 3248.

Parnaso, *pr. n.* Mount Parnassus. 11033.

Perrie, *n.* Fr. Jewels; precious stones. 2938. 5926.

Persaunt, *part. pr.* Fr. Piercing. R. 2809.

Persie, *pr. n.* Persia. 14258.

——— *adj.* Fr. Skie-coloured; of a blewish-grey. 441.

Persele, *n.* Sax. Lat. Parsely. 4348.

Persone, *n.* Barb. Lat A man; generally, a man of dignity. 10339.—A parson, or rector of a church. 7590.—See his Character, 479—530. Personer. T. L. ii. 396.

Pertelote, *pr. n.* of a hen. 14876.

Perturbe, *v.* Fr. To trouble. 908.

Perturbing, *n.* Disturbance. 7836.

Pervinke, *n.* Sax. Lat. The herb periwinkle. R. 903.

Pery, *n.* Fr. A pear-tree. 10091.

Pese, *n.* Fr. R. 4703. as Pees.

Pesen, *n. pl.* Sax. Peas. L. W. 648.

Pesible, *adj.* Peaceable. R. 7413.

Peter Alfonse. M. 110. col. 2, l. 60. 111, col. 1, l. 60. Piers Alfonse. M. 108, col. 2, l. 2 112, col. 2, l. 42. 116 col. 1, l. 63. See the note on M. 108, col. 2, l. 2.

Petrark, *pr. n.* 7907. 14331. See the note on ver. 7927. and 14253. Our author has inserted a translation of the 102d Sonnet of Petrarch into his *Troilus and Cresside.* B. i. ver. 394—421. It is not in the *Filostrato.* There seems to be no sufficient reason for believing that Chaucer had ever seen Petrarch. See the Discourse, &c. §. xx. n. 20.

Peytrel, *n.* Fr. The breast-plate of a horse. 16032. P. 156, col. 1, l. 17.

Phisike, *n.* Fr. Medicine. 415. 2762. *Doctour of Phisike.* See his Character. 413—446.

Phisiologus, *pr. n.* 15277. See the note. There was a larger work, with the same title, in prose, which is frequently quoted by Vincent of Beauvais.

PHITON, *pr. n.* The serpent Python. 17058, 77.
PHITONESSE, *n.* BARB. LAT. A witch. 7092. F. iii. 171. See the n. on ver. 7092.
PIE, *n.* FR. A mag-pie. 10963.—A prating gossip, or tell-tale. T. iii. 528. F. ii. 195.
PIERRIE, *n.* FR. Jewels; precious stones. 14311.
PIGGESNIE. See the n. on ver. 3268.
PIGHT, *pa. t.* of PIKE, *v.* SAX. Pitched. 2691.
PIKE, *v.* SAX. To pitch. To pick, as a hawk does his feathers. 9885. To steal. L. W. 2456.—To peep. T. iii. 60.
——— *n.* SAX. A fish so called. 9293.
PIKEREL, *n.* SAX. A young pike. 9293.
PILCHE, *n.* SAX. A coat, or cloak, of skins. Prov. 4. *Toga pellicea.* Junius in v.
PILER, *n.* FR. A pillar. 1995. Du. 739.
PILLE, *v.* FR. *Piller.* To rob; to plunder. 6944. P. 164, col. 1, l. 25.
PILLED, rather PILED, *part. pa.* FR. *Pelé.* Bald. 629. 3933.
PILLOURS, *n. pl.* FR. Plunderers. 1009. P. 164. col. 1, l. 31.
PILWE, *n.* SAX. A pillow. T. v. 224.
PILWE-BERE, *n.* SAX. The covering of a pillow. 696.
PIMENT, *n.* BARB. LAT. Spiced wine. R. 6027.—Wine mixed with honey. Bo. ii. m. 5. See CLARRE.
PINCHE, *v.* FR. To squeeze. *Ther coude no wight pinche at his writing.* 328. No one coud lay hold of any flaw in his writings.
PINE, *n.* SAX. Pain; grief. 1326. 6369.
——— *v.* SAX. To torment. R. 3511.
PINED, *part. pa.* Tortured. 15065.
PIPE, *v.* SAX. To play on a pipe. 3874. *To pipe in an ivy lefe.* 1840. T. L. iii. 348. is put for any *useless employment;* as it is now said of a disappointed man, *He may go whistle.* See BUCKES HORN.
PISTELL, *n.* SAX. LAT. An epistle. 9030.—A short lesson. 6603.
PITANCE, *n.* FR. A mess of victuals. 224. It properly means an extraordinary allowance of victuals, given to Monastics, in addition to their usual commons. See Du Cange, in v. PICTANTIA.
PITH, *n.* SAX. Marrow; strength. 6057.
PITOUS, *adj.* FR. Merciful. 10334.—Compassionate. 8960. —Exciting compassion. 8962.
PITOUSLY, *adv.* Pitifully. 5339. 8958.
PLAGE, *n.* LAT. The plague. P. 159, col. 2, l. 49.
PLAGES, *n. pl.* LAT. The divisions of the globe. *The plages of the North.* 4963. The Northern regions.
PLAIN, *n.* FR. A plain. 4444. 11510.
——— *adj.* Simple; clear. 11032. It is often used as an *adverb.* 792. 5306. See PLAT.
——— *v.* To make plain. T. v. 1229.
PLAINE, *v.* FR. To complain. 5969. 11629.
PLAINLICHE, *adv.* Plainly. T. ii. 272.
PLAT, PLATTE, *adj.* FR. Flat; plain. 1847. 12582.—The flat of a sword. 10476. T. iv. 937.—It is often used as an *adverb.* 12582. *All plat,* i. e. Flatly. *Ful plat and eke ful plain.* 14675.
PLATE, *n.* A flat piece of metal. *A brest-plate.* 2122. Armour for the breast. *A pair of plates.* 2123. Armour for the breast and back.
PLAY, *n.* SAX. Sport; pleasure. 8906. 3047.
——— *v.* To sport; to take pleasure. 12892. 12902. To act upon a stage. 3384. To play upon musical instruments. 3306. 3333. *To play a pilgrimage.* 13163, 4. To withdraw upon pretence of going on a pilgrimage.
PLE, *n.* FR. An argument, or pleading. A. F. 485.
PLEIN, *adj.* FR. Full; perfect. 339. 8802.
PLENERE, *adj.* FR. Compleat. L. W. 1605.
PLESANCE, *n.* FR. Pleasure. 9308. 9524.
PLESINGES, *n. pl.* Pleasures. 5131.
PLETE, *v.* FR. To plead. T. ii. 1468.
PLETING, *n.* Pleading. P. 149, col. 2, l. 48.
PLIE, *v.* FR. To bend, or mould. 9045. 9304.
PLIGHT, *n.* Condition. P. 164, col. 1, l. 7.
——— *pa. t.* and *part.* of PLUCK, *v.* SAX. Pulled; plucked. 4435. 6372. 14055. R. 1745.
PLIGHTE, *v.* SAX. To engage; to promise. 6591. 13128.
——— *pa. t.* 6633. PLIGHTEN, *pl.* 11640.
PLITE, *v.* To plait, or fold. T. ii. 697. 1204. See PLIE.
PLITE, *n.* Condition; form. 16420. See PLIGHT.
PLUNGY, *adj.* FR. Wet; rainy. Bo. iii. m. 1.
POILEIS, *adj.* FR. Of Apulia, antiently called POYLE. See the n. on ver. 10509. *Willamme's dogter Conversant in* POYLE *to wyve he nome.* R. G. 413.
POINT, *n.* FR. The principal business. 2967.—A stop, or full point. 16948.—*In good point.* 200. In good case, or condition. *At point devise.* 3689. 10674. R. 1215. With the greatest exactness. *At point to brest.* T. iv. 1638 *In point for to brast.* R. 3186. Ready to burst.
POINTEL, *n.* FR. A style, or pencil, for writing. 7334. Bo. i. pr. 1.
POINTEN, *inf. m. v.* FR. To prick with any thing pointed. R. 1058.
POKE, *n.* FR. A pocket. 3778.—A bag. 4276. See POUCHE
——— *v.* FR. To thrust, 4167.
POLIVE, *n.* A pullie. 10498.
POLLAX, *n.* SAX. A halberd. 2546. *Bipennis.* Prompt. Parv.
POMEL, *n.* FR. Any ball, or round thing. The top of the head. 2691.
POMELEE, *adj.* FR. Spotted with round spots like apples, dappled. *Pomelee gris.* 16027. Of a dapple-grey colour.
POPELOT, *n.* See the n. on ver. 3254.
POPET, *n.* FR. A puppet. 13631.
POPINGAY, *n.* A parrot. 10196. 13299. *Papegaut,* FR *Papegaey.* BELG. *Papagallo.* ITAL.
POPPED, *adj.* FR. Nicely dressed. R. 1019.
POPPER, *n.* See the n. on ver. 3929.
PORE, *v.* To look earnestly. 5877. 7320.
——— *adj.* 7518. for POURE.
POREN, *pr. t. pl.* 16138.
PORISME, *n.* GR. Bo. iii. pr. 10. is used in the sense of—A corollary; a theorem deduced from another.
PORPHURIE, *pr. n.* of a species of marble; Porphyrie. 16943
PORT, *n.* FR. Carriage; behaviour. 69. 138.
PORTECOLISE, *n.* FR. A falling gate, a portcullis. R. 4168.
PORTOS, *n.* See the n. on ver. 13061.
POSE, *n.* A rheum, or defluxion, obstructing the voice. 4150. 17011. *Catarrus. Corisa.* Prompt. Parv.
——— *v.* FR. To suppose. 1164. T. iii. 572. I POSE, *I had sinned so.* P. P. 95. b.
POSSE, *v.* FR. To push. L. W. 2409.
POSSED, *part. pa.* R. 4479.
POSSESSIONERS, *n. pl.* LAT. An invidious name for such religious communities as were endowed with lands, &c 7304. The Mendicant orders professed to live entirely upon alms.
POST, *n.* SAX. A prop, or support. 214. T. i. 1001.
POSTE, *n.* FR. Power. R. 6484. 6533.
POTECARY, *n.* FR. An apothecary. 12786.
POTENT, *n.* FR. A crutch. R. 368. 7417. A walking-stick. 7358.
POTENTIAL, *adj.* FR. Strong; powerful. F. iii. 5.
POTESTAT, *n* FR. A principal magistrate. 7599.
POUCHE, *n.* FR. Pocket; pouch. 3929.
POUDRE, *n.* FR. Powder. 16228. F. ii. 28.
POUDRES, *pl.* 16275.
POUDRE MARCHANT. 383. See the note.
POVERTE, *n.* FR. Poverty. 6759. 6767. It is to be pronounced *Povérte;* the final *e* being considered as an *e* feminine.
POULCE, *n.* FR. The pulse. T. iii. 1120.
POULE, *pr. n.* St. Paul. 7229. *Poules windowes.* 3318. See the note.
POUNSONED, *part. pa.* FR. Punched with a bodkin. P. 155. col. 2, l. 44.
POUPE, *v.* To make a noise with a horn. 15405. 17039.
POURCHACE, *n.* FR. To buy. 610.—To provide. 5293. T. ii 1125.
POURCHAS, *n.* FR. Acquisition; purchase. 258. 7033.
POURE, *v.* R. 1640. T. ii. 1708. as PORE.
——— *adj.* FR. Poor. 6769. 6775.
POURTRAIE, *v.* FR. To draw a picture. 96.
POURTRAIOUR, *n.* A drawer of pictures. 1901.
POURTRAITURE, *n.* A picture, or drawing. 1917. 1970.
PRACTICKE, *n.* Fr. Practice. 5769.
PREAMBLE, *n.* FR. Preface. 6413.
PREAMBULATIOUN, *n.* Preamble. 6419.

Precious, *adj.* Fr. Over-nice. 5730. 9636.
Predestine, *n.* Fr. Predestination. T. iv. 966.
Predication, *n.* Fr. Preaching; a sermon. 12279.
Prees, *n.* Fr. A press, or crowd. 5066. 6104.
Preve, **Preve**, *n.* Fr. Proof; trial. 8663. *At preve.* T. iii. 1004. Upon trial. *With evil prefe.* 5829. Evil may it prove! See With.
Prefect, *n.* Fr. Lat. A governour, or principal magistrate. 15830.
Praise, *n.* Fr. Commendation. 8902.
——— *v.* Fr. To commend. 8898. 9420.—To value. 9728.
Prentis, *n.* Fr. An apprentice. 4383. 5885.
Prentishode, *n.* Apprenticeship. 4398.
Preparat, *part. pa.* Lat. Prepared. 16278.
Pres, *adv.* Fr. Near. So I suspect this word is to be understood in ver. 14143. *Of près.* i. e. at hand; close. *De près.* Fr. Or perhaps *Of près* may be put for *In a prees.* See Prees.
Prese, *v.* Fr. To press, or crowd. 2582. R. 4198.
Present, *v.* Fr. To offer; to make a present of. 12190. *And with the wine she gan him to* present. L. W. 1093. *And smote his hed of, his fader to* present. P. L. 18.
Presentarie, *adj.* Lat. Present. Bo. v. pr. 6.
Prest, *adj.* Fr. Ready. T. ii. 785. iii. 919.
Pretend, *v.* Fr. To lay claim to. T. iv. 922.
Preterit, *adj.* Fr. Passed. R. 5011.
Preve, *v.* Fr. To try. 8575. 9028.—To demonstrate by trial. 10112.
——— *v. neut.* To turn out upon trial. 8876.
Prick, *n.* Sax. A point. Bo. ii. pr. 7. F. ii. 399.—A pointed weapon. 2608.
——— **Prike**, *v.* Sax. To wound. 8914.—To spur a horse; to ride hard. 16029. R. 2314.
Prickasour, *n.* A hard rider. 189.
Pricking, *n.* Hard riding. 191.
Prideles, *adj.* Sax. Without pride. 8806.
Prie, *v.* To look curiously. 3458. 7320.
Prikke, *n.* 5449. See Prick.
Prime, *adj.* Fr. Lat. First. *At prime temps.* R. 3373. At the first time. *At prime face.* T. iii. 921. At first appearance.
——— *n.* The first quarter of the artificial day. T. ii. 1095. *Half way prime.* 3904. Prime half spent. See the n. on ver. 3904. *Prime large.* 10674. Prime far advanced. In ver. 10387. it seems to be used metaphorically for *the season of action or business.*
Primerole, *n.* Fr. A primrose. 3268. *Conf. Am.* 148. b.
Primetemps, *n.* Fr. Spring. R. 4747.
Pris, *n.* Fr. Price. 817.—Praise. 67. 237. T. ii. 181. 376. *Or it be* prys, *or it be* blame. *Conf. Am.* 165.
Prive, *adj.* Fr. Private. *Privé and apert.* 6696. Private and publick. *Privé man.* 8395. A man entrusted with private business.
Prively, *adv.* Privately. 1445.
Privetee, *n.* Private business. 3454. 3603.
Processe, *n.* Lat. Progress. 2969.
Professioun, *n.* Fr. The monastic profession. 13085. R. 4910.
Proheme, *n.* Fr. Gr. A preface. 7919.
Proine, *v.* Fr. *Provigner.* It seems to have signified, originally, *to take cuttings from vines*, in order to plant them out. From hence it has been used for the cutting away of the superfluous shoots of all trees; which we now call *pruning*; and for that operation, which birds, and particularly hawks, perform upon themselves, of picking out their superfluous or damaged feathers. In allusion to this last sense, Damian is said to *proine and pike* himself. 9885. Gower, speaking of an *eagle*, says,

> For there *he pruneth him and piketh*,
> As doth an hauke, whan him wel liketh.
> *Conf. Am.* 139.

Prolle, *v.* To go about in search of a thing. 16890.
Provable, *adj.* Fr. Capable of being demonstrated. R. 5414.
Provende, *n.* Fr. *Præbenda.* Lat. A prebend; a daily or annual allowance, or stipend. R. 6931. See Du Cange, in v. Præbenda.
Provendre, *n.* A prebendary. T. L. ii. 326.
Proverbe, *n.* Fr. Lat. A prudential maxim. 6233. 9441.
Proverbe, *v.* To speak proverbially. T. iii. 294.
Provostry, *n.* Fr. The office of Provost, or Prefect. *Præfectura.* Bo. iii. pr. 4.
Prow, *n.* Fr. Profit; advantage. 12234. 13338.
Prowesse, *n.* Fr. Integrity. Bo. iv. pr. 3.
Pruce, *pr. n.* Prussia. 53.
——— *adj.* Prussian. 2124.
Pruned, *pa. t.* C. D. 1874. as Proined.
Ptholomee, *pr. n.* 5764. 5906. See the note on ver. 5764. and 17278. and *Rom. de la R.* 7399. 19449.
Puella and **Rubeus**. 2047. "The names of two figures in Geomancie, representing two constellations in heaven: *Puella* signifieth Mars retrograde, and *Rubeus* Mars direct." *Sp.*
Pulchritude, *n.* Lat. Beauty. C. L. 613.
Pullaile, *n.* Fr. Poultry. R. 7094.
Pulled hen. 177. See the note. I have been told since, that a hen whose feathers are pulled, or plucked off, will not lay any eggs. If that be true, there is more force in the epithet than I apprehended.
Punice, *v.* Fr. To punish. R. 7187. T. v. 1706.
Pure, *adj.* Fr. Mere; very. See the n. on ver. 1281. and add these instances. *Pure fere.* Du. 1251. *Pure kind.* F. ii. 316.
Pured, *part. pa.* Purified. 5725. 11864.
Purfiled, *part. pa.* See the n. on ver. 193.
Purpos, *n.* Fr. Purpose; design. 6293.—Proposition in discourse. T. ii. 897.
Purprise, *n.* Fr. An inclosure. R. 3967.
Purveyance, *n.* Fr. Foresight; Providence. 1254. 3013.—Provision. 3566.
Purveye, *v.* To foresee. T. iv. 1066.—To provide. 6173.
Puterie, *n.* Fr. Whoredom. P. 167, col. 1, l. 38.
Putours, *n. pl.* Whoremongers. P. 167, col. 1, l. 37.
Pythagoras, *pr. n.* Du. 1167. See the passage quoted in v. Aurora.

Q.

Quad, **Quade**, *adj.* Teut. Bad. See the n. on ver. 4345. and ver. 13368. *None quad;* Nothing evil. *Conf. Am.* 103.
Quaile-pipe, *n.* A pipe used to call quails. R. 7213.
Quaire, *n.* Fr. A quire of paper; a book. B. K. 675.
Quakke, *n.* 4150. seems to be put for an inarticulate noise, occasioned by any obstruction in the throat.
Qualme, *n.* Sax. Sickness. 2016.—The noise made by a raven. T. v. 382.
Quappe, *v.* To tremble; to quake. T. iii. 57. L. W. 865.
Quarels, *n. pl.* Fr. Square arrows. R. 1823.
Queint, *n.* See *Junii Etymolog.* in v.
Queinte, *adj.* Fr. Strange. 2335. 10553. *I made of that lef: full queint.* R. 3079. See ver. 11530. He made it *strange.*—Cunning; artful. 3605. 4049.—Trim; neat. R. 2251.
——— *pa. t. & part.* of Quench, *v.* Sax. Quenched. 2336. 2338, 9.
Queintise, *n.* Trimness; neatness. R. 2250.—Excessive trimness. P. 168, col. 2, l. 16.—Cunning. P. 163, col. 1, l. 42.
Quelle, *v.* Sax. To kill; to destroy. 15396. 16173.
Queme, *v.* Sax. To please. R. 7222. T. v. 695. *Wel me* quemeth. *Conf. Am.* 68.
Quene, *n.* Sax. A queen. 4581.—A harlot. R. 7082.
Querne, *n.* Sax. A hand-mill. 14080. F. iii. 708.
Querrour, *n.* Fr. One that works in a stone-quarry. R. 4149.
Queste, *n.* Fr. A prayer or demand. F. iii. 648.
Quest-mongers, *n. pl.* Packers of inquests, or juries. P. 164, col. 2, l. 67.
Quethe, *v.* Sax. To say; to declare. *I quethe him quite.* R. 6999. is a translation of an old technical term in the law; *Clamo illi quietum.* The original Fr. has only *Je quitte.*
Quik, *adj.* Sax. Alive. 1017. R. 5056.
Quikkest, *superl. d.* Speediest. *The quikkest strete.* 11806. The most expeditious way.
Quiken, *v.* Sax. To make alive. 15949.
Quikkd, *part. pa.* Made alive. 11362.
——— *pa. t.* of the same v. used in a *neutral* sense. 2337. Became alive.
Quinible, *n.* 3332. is the instrument, I suppose, which is

called in Barb. Lat. *Quinterna* and *Quintaria*. See Du Cange, and Carpentier, in v. *Quinternisare;* and Mehus, *Vita d' Ambr. Camald.* p. 323. *Lyrâ limbuld*, quintariâ, *ribebâ, avenâ, tibiisque.*

Quishin, *n.* Fr. A cushion. T. iii. 966.

Quistron, *n.* R. 886. A beggar. Gl. *Ur.* I rather believe it signifies a Scullion; *un garçon de cuisine.*

Quite, *adj.* Fr. Free; quiet. 15916.

——— *v.* Fr. To requite; to pay for. 772. 3121.—To acquit. R. 3069.

Quitte, *part. pa.* Requited. R. 3146.

Quitely, *adv.* Freely; at liberty. 1794.

Quod, *pa. t.* of Quethe. Said. 790. 839.

Quoke, *pa. t.* of Quake, *v.* Sax. Trembled; shook. 1578. 14210.

R.

Ra, *n.* Sax. A roe deer. 4084.

Racine, *n.* Fr. A root. R. 4881.

Rad, Radde, *pa. t.* of Rede, *v.* Sax. Advised. A. F. 579.—Explained. Du. 281.

Radevore, L. W. 2341. Tapestry. "*Ras* in Fr. signifies any stuff, as *Ras de Chalons, Ras de Gennes, Ras de Vore*, or *Vaur*, may be a stuff made at such a place." Gloss. *Ur.* There is a town in Languedoc, called *La Vaur;* but I know not that it was ever famous for tapestry.

Rafles, *n. pl.* Fr. Plays with dice. P. 164, col. 2, l. 51.

Rafte, *pa. t.* of Reve, *v* Sax. Took away. 14104, 7.

Rage, *v.* Fr. To toy wantonly. 259. 3273.

Ragerie, *n.* Wantonness. 6037. 9721.

Ragouncee. R. 1117. should probably be Jagonces, as in the Orig. Fr. The precious stones, called Jacinths, or Hyacinths.

Raines, *pr. n.* The city of Rennes in Bretagne Du. 255.

Rake-stele, *n.* Sax. The handle of a rake 6531.

Rakel, *adj.* Hasty, rash. 17227 T. i. 1068.

Rakelnesse, *n.* Rashness. 17232.

Raket. *To play raket; nettle in, dock out;* seems to be used as a proverbial expression, signifying, *to be inconstant.* T. iv. 461. T. L. i. 319. b. What the original of the phrase may have been is not so clear.

Ramage, *adj.* Fr. Wild. R. 5384.

Rammish, *adj.* Sax. Rank, like a ram. 16355.

Rampe, *v.* Fr To climb. *She rampeth in my face.* 13910. She rises against me; flies in my face.

Ran, *pa. t.* of Renne, 4103. 6552. Rannen, *pl.* 2927.

Rape, *adv.* Quickly; speedily. R. 6516.

——— *n.* Haste. Ch. *wordes to his Scrivener.* 7.

——— *v.* Sax. To take captive. *To rape and renne.* 16890. To seize and plunder. See Renne.

Rasis, *pr. n.* 434. An Arabian Physician of the xth Century. See Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* t. xiii. p. 46. in v. Albubecar.

Raskaile, *n.* A pack of rascals. T. v. 1852.

Rated, *part. pa.* Chidden. 3463.

Rathe, *adv.* Sax. Soon; early. 13029.—Speedily. T. ii. 1068.

Rather, *comp. d.* Sooner. 10176.

Rathest, *superl. d.* Soonest. B. K. 428.

Rather, *adj.* Sax. *comp. d.* Former. T. iii. 1342.

Ratouns, *n. pl.* Fr. Rats. 12788.

Raught, *pa. t.* of Reccan, *v.* Sax. Reached. 136. 2917. *On his way he raught.* T. ii. 447. He sprang forth on his way.

——— *pa. t.* of Reccan, *v.* Sax. Cared; rekked. 3770. 15346.

Ravaners (*Ravinours*), *n. pl.* Plunderers. Bo. i. pr. 3.

Ravine, *n.* Fr. Rapine. *Foules of ravine.* A. F. 323. Birds of prey.

Ravisable, *adj.* Fr. Ravenous. R. 7066.

Ravishing, *part. pr.* Fr. Rapid. *With a ravishing sweigh.* Bo. i. m. 5. *Rapido turbine.* Orig. See Swegh.

Raunson, *n.* Fr. Ransom. 1178.

Rayed, *part. pa.* Fr. Streaked, or striped. Du. 252.

Real, *adj.* Fr. Royal. 1499. 15190.

Realler, *comp. d.* More royal. 4822.

Reallich, *adv.* Royally. 380.

Realtee, *n.* Royalty. 4838.

Rebekke, *pr. n.* Rebeccah. 9578.

——— *n.* Fr. A musical instrument. See the n. on ver. 6959.

Rechased, *pa. t.* Fr. A term in hunting. Du. 379.

Recche, Rekke, *v.* Sax. To care. 2947. 4514.

Recchele, *adj.* Careless. 8364.

Recchelesnesse, *n.* Carelessness. P. 162, col. 2, l. 38.

Reclaime, *v.* Fr. A term in Falconry, for bringing the hawk to the fist, by a certain call. 17021.

Reclaiming, *n.* Calling; in the sense of Reclaime. L. W. 1369.

Recomfort, *v.* Fr. To comfort. 2854. M. 117, col. 2, l. 34.

Record, *n.* Fr. Witness; testimony. Du. 934.

Recorde, *v.* Fr. To remember. Bo. iii. m. 11.—In ver. 1747. it seems to be used in a technical legal sense, for what is called *to enter upon record* in judicial proceedings.

Recreandise, *n.* Fr. signifies fear; cowardice; desertion of principle. R. 2107. 4038.

Recreant, *adj.* One who yields himself to his adversary in single combat. P. 162, col. 2, l. 4. R. 4090. For the full import of these two words, see Du Cange, in v. Recredentia.

Recure, *n.* Fr. Recovery. B. K. 682.

Recured, *part. pa.* Fr. Recovered. R. 4920. B. K 652.

Redde, Red, *pa. t.* of Rede, *v.* Sax. 6296. 6303. T. v. 737.

Reddour, *n.* Fr. Strength; violence. *Fort.* 13.

Rede, *n.* Sax. Advice; counsel. 14467. 3537.—A reed. T. ii. 1387.

——— *v.* Sax. To advise. 3073. 16476.—To read. 6382. 6227.—To explain. Du. 279.

——— *adj.* Sax. Red. 1971. 14934.

Redoute, *v.* Fr. To fear. R. 2023.

Redouting, *n.* Reverence. 2052.

Redresse, *v.* Fr. To recover. T. ii. 969.—To make amends for. 11748.

Refect, *part. pa.* Lat. Recovered. Bo. iv. pr. 6.

Refigurine, *part. pr.* Fr. Figuring again. T. v. 472.

Refrain, *n.* Fr. The burthen of a song. T. ii. 1571.

Refraining, *n.* The singing of the burthen of a song. R. 749.

Refreide, *v.* Fr. To cool. T. ii. 1343.

Refrete, *n.* The same as Refrain. T. L. iii. 341. b. In *Ber.* 468. it is printed corruptly *Frefreit.*

Refte, Rifte, *n.* Sax. A chink, or crevice. R. 2651.

Refute, *n.* Fr. Refuge. 5272. 15543.

Regals, *n. pl.* Fr. Royalties. L. W. 2126.

Regard, *n.* Fr. *At regard of.* P. 164, col. 2, l. 34. 171, col. 2, l. 49. With respect to; in comparison of.

Regne, *n.* Fr. A kingdom. 868. 14190.

Rehete, *v.* Fr. *Rehaiter.* To revive; to cheer. R. 6309.

Reheting, *n.* T. iii. 350. according to several MSS. "*And all the* reheting *of his sikes sore.*" "Some MSS. and most of the printed Editions read *richesse* instead of *reheting.*" Gloss. *Ur.* *Richesse*, though almost as aukward an expression as the other, is more agreeable to the corresponding passage in the Filostrato—

"*E sospir che gli avea a gran* dovicia"—

and one can hardly conceive that it could come from any hand but that of the author. I can make no sense of *reheting;* but at the same time I must allow that it is not likely to have been inserted by way of a gloss.

Reile, *v. neut.* To roll. *Reileth diversly.* Bo. i. m. 7. *Vagatur.* Orig.

Reines, *pr. n.* R. 3826. See Raines.

Rejoie, *v.* Fr. To rejoice. T. v. 395.

Reke, *v.* Sax. To exhale. L. W. 2601.

Reken, *v.* Sax. To reckon. 3198.—To come to a reckoning. 4530.

Rekes, *n. pl.* Sax. Ricks (of corn). T. L. Prol.

Relaies, *n. pl.* Fr. Fresh sets of hounds. Du. 362.

Relees, *n.* Fr. Release. B. K. 333. See the n. on ver. 15514.

Relefe, *n.* Sax. What is left. T. L. Prol.

Religiousite, *n.* Fr. Persons of a religious profession; the Clergy. C. L. 686.

Relike, *n.* Fr. A relick. 12883. Relikes, *pl.* 703.

Remenant, *n.* Fr. A remnant; a remaining part. 1571. 3166.

Remes, *n. pl.* Fr. Realms. 15142.

Remissaile, *n. pl.* Fr. Orts; leavings. T. L. Prol.

Remorde, *v.* Fr. To cause remorse. T. iv. 1491. To afflict. Bo. iv. pr. 6.

Remuable, *adj.* Fr. Moveable; inconstant. T. iv. 1692.
Remue, Remewe, Remeve, *v.* Fr. To remove. 11305. 11532. *Conf. Am.* 164. b.
Remued, *pa. t.* 11517. R. 7432.
Renably, *adv.* Fr. Reasonably. 7091.
Renegate, *n.* Fr. An apostate from Christianity. 5353.
Reneie, *v.* Fr. To renounce; to abjure. 4760. 4796.
Renges, *n. pl.* Fr. Ranks. 2596.—The steps of a ladder. 3625. See the note.
Renne, *v.* Sax. To run. 3888. 4063.—To rend. q? 16890.
Renomee, *n.* Fr. Renown. 6741. L. W. 1511.
Renovelaunce, *n.* Fr. A renewing. F. ii. 185.
Renovelle, *v.* Fr. To renew. M. 120, col. 1, l. 4. P. 170, col. 2, l. 70.
Rent, *v.* Sax. To tear, or rend. R. 394.
Repaire, *n.* Fr. Resort. 6806.
——— *v.* Fr. To return. 10903.
Repentant, *part. pr.* Fr. Repenting. 228. 10969.
Repreve, Repreve, *n.* Fr. Reproof. 10080. 10137.
Repression, *n.* T. iii. 1040. seems to be put for *power of repressing*.
Requere, *v.* Fr. To require. 6592.
Rere, *v.* Sax. To raise. C. D. 468.
Rescous, *n.* Fr. Rescue. 2645.
Rescowe, *v.* Fr. To rescue. T. v. 231.
Reson, *n.* Fr. Reason. 9552. Proportion. Bo. ii. pr. 7.
Resons, *n. pl.* Fr. Discourses. T. iii. 90.
Respite, *n.* T. v. 137. may, perhaps, be put for *Respect*.
Respiten, *inf. m.* Fr. To grant a respite. 11886.—To excuse. R. 6084.
Resport, *n.* T. iv. 850. is probably put for *Respect*.
Reste, *n.* Sax. Repose. 9729.
——— *v.* Sax. To repose; to cease from labour. 2623.
Retenue, *n.* Fr. Retinue. 8146. *At his retenue.* 6937. Retained by him.
Rethor, *n.* Fr. Lat. An orator, or rhetorician. 10352.
Reve, *n.* Sax. A steward, or bailiff. See his Character, ver. 589—624.
——— *v.* Sax. To take away. 4009. P. 159, col. 1, l. 4.
Revel, *n.* Fr. Entertainment, properly *during the night*. 2719. Sport; festivity. 4400. L. W. 2242.
Reveloure, *n.* A reveller. 4389.
Revelrie, *n.* Pleasure. R. 720.
Revers, *adj.* Fr. Contrary. 7638. 14963.
Reverse, *v.* Fr. To overturn. R. 5468.
Revert, *v.* Fr. To turn back. R. 7284.
Revest, *v.* Fr. To cloath again. T. iii. 354.
Rew, *n.* A row, or line. *On a rew.* 2868. In a line. *All by rew.* 6088. See A' row.
Rewake, *v.* Sax. To waken again. T. iii. 1124.
Reward, *n.* Fr. Regard; respect. *Take reward of thin owen value.* P. 149, col. 2, l. 16. Have regard to t. o. v. *In reward of.* R. 3954. In comparison with. See Regard.
Rewe, *v.* Sax. To have compassion. 1865.—To suffer; to have cause to repent. 3530.
Rewel bone. 13807. See the note.
Reyes, *n. pl.* F. iii. 146. Dances, in use among the Dutch. *Reye.* Belg. *Chorea celerior, chorea in longam seriem.* Kilian.
Reysed. See the n. on ver. 54. "*Les Gandois firent une rese sur les marches de Haynault, et dedans le pays pillerent, bruslerent, et firent moult de maux.*" Mem. de la Marche, p. 384. Where a note in the margin says, "*Reyse* en bas Alemand signifie un *voyage* ou *course*."
Ribaninges, *n. pl.* R. 1077. seems to signifie *Borders*.
Ribaude, *n.* A poor labourer. R. 5673. But the word generally implies profligacy of manners as well as meanness of condition. See Du Cange, in v. Ribaldus.
Ribaudrie, *n.* Ribaldry; indecent words, or actions. 3964. 12258.
Ribibe, *n.* See the n. on ver. 6959.
Ribible, *n.* A small ribibe. 3331. 4394.
Richard, *pr. n.* 15354. In the Essay, &c. n. 50. I have vindicated the character of this heroic prince from an aspersion, which was first cast upon him, I find, by Mr. Rymer, in consequence of a mistaken construction of a passage in Hoveden. I am tempted to add here the beginning of a poem, which having been composed after his death by *Anselm Faydit*, must stand clear of all suspicion of having been either *begged* or *bought*.

For chausa es et tot lo maior dan,
El maior dol, las! q eu anc mais agues,
Et zo, don dei toz temps plaigner ploran,
M aven a dir en chantar et retraire,
De cel q era de valorz caps et paire.
Li reis valenz Rizard, reis des Engles,
Es morz; ai deus! cals perda et cals danz es!
Can estraing moz et qan greu per audir!
Ben a dur cor toz hom co po sofrir.
Morz es li reis, et son passat mil an
Qanc tan pros hom no fo ne nol vit res,
Ne ia mais hom non er del sen senblant,
Tan larcs, tan pros, tan ardiz, tals donaire;
Q Alixandres lo reis, qe venqi Daire,
No cuit qe tan dones ni tan messes,
Ni an Charles ni Artus tan valgues,
Q a tot lo mon sen sez, qi n vol ver dir,
Als us doptar et als altres grazii.
MS. Crofts. fol. cxi.

Richesse, *n.* Fr. Wealth. 6692. Richesses, *pl.* Riches. M. 113, col. 2, l. 28. 114, col. 1, l. 38.
Riddeled, *part. pa.* R. 1235, 43. Plaited. Gl. *Ur.* In the first of the places quoted, the French Orig. has—Et fut si bien *cueillie et jointe*,—which Chaucer has translated—Lorde! it was *riddeled* fetisly.
Ridden, *part. pa.* of Ride. *He is ridden.* 1505. *They ben ridden.* 1689. *He had ridden.* 13729.
Ride, *v.* Sax. *He rideth him.* 1693.
Riding, *n.* See the n. on ver. 4375.
Rife, Rive, *v.* Sax. To thrust through. 9112. 12762.
Right, *n.* Sax. A right, or due. *At alle rightes.* 1854. 2102. At all points.
——— *adj.* Good; true. 189.
——— *adv.* Truely; rightly; exactly; completely. It is frequently joined to adjectives, as the adverbs *well* and *full* are, to augment their force. 290. 617.
Rime, *n.* Fr. A composition in rime. 13639. Hence the title of The Rime of Sire Thopas. For the original of compositions in rime, see the Essay, &c. n. 43 — *Rime-dogerel.* 13851. See Dogerel.
Rimeyed, *part. pa.* Fr. Composed in rime, or verse. 11023. See the n. on ver. 11021.
Rimpled, *part. pa.* Sax. Wrinkled. R. 4495.
Ring, *v.* Sax. To make to sound. 2433. 12265.
——— *v. neut.* To sound. 2602.
Rise, *n.* Sax. Small twigs of trees or bushes. 3324. R. 1015.
Rishe, *n.* Sax. A rush. R. 1701. T. iii. 1167.
Rist for **Riseth**. 3688. T. ii. 812.
Rit for **Rideth**. 976. 17028.
Rivage. F. i. 223. See Arivage.
Rive, *v. neut.* Sax. To split; to fall asunder. R. 5393. 5718.
Riveling, *part. pr.* Sax. Wrinkling. R. 7214. *Ruffelen.* Belg. *Rugare.* Kilian.
Rivere, *n.* Fr. See the n. on ver. 6466.
Roche, *n.* Fr. A rock. F. iii. 26. Roches, *pl.* F. ii. 527.
Rode, *n.* Sax. The Cross. *Rode-beem.* 6078. It is also called the *Rode-tree*; from its being made of wood.
——— *n.* Sax. Complexion. 3317.
Rody, *adj.* Sax. Ruddy. 10699.
Rofe, *pa. t.* of Rife. L. W. 661. 1349. **Rofte**. F. i. 373. should probably be Rofe.
Rogge, *v.* Sax. To shake. L. W. 2697. Roggyn or mevyn. *Agito.* Prompt. Parv.
Roigne, *n.* Fr. A scab, mange, &c. R. 553.
Roignous, *adj.* Fr. Scabby; rough. R. 6190. 968.
Rokette, *n.* Fr. A loose upper garment. R. 1240, 2. 4754.
Roking, *part. pr.* of Rokke, or Rogge, *v. neut.* Sax. Shaking; trembling. R. 1906. Roggyn or waveryn. *Vacillo* Prompt. Parv.
Romaunces reales. See the n. on ver. 13777.
Rombel, *n.* A rumbling noise. 1981.—Rumour. 8873.
Rome, *v.* Sax. To walk about. 7994. 11155.
Rondel, *n.* Fr. "A rime or sonnet which ends as it begins. *Cotgrave.*" L. W. 423.
Rone, *pr. n.* Rouen in Normandy. R. 1674.
——— *pa. t.* of Rain, *v.* Sax. Rained. T. iii. 678.
Ropen, *part. pa.* of Repe, *v.* Sax. Reaped. L. W. 74.

ROSALGAR. 16282. Red arsenic; a preparation of orpiment. Chambers, in v. *Realgar*. It should rather perhaps have been written *Rysalgar*, with MS. C. 1. as the Latin name is *Risigallum*.

ROSEN, *adj.* Rosy. B.K. 657.

ROSER, *n.* FR. A rose-bush. P. 166, col. 2, l. 10.

ROSE-RED, *adj.* 15722. Red as a rose.

ROTE, *n.* SAX. A root. 2. T. ii. 348.

——— A root, in astrology. 4734. See EXPANS YERES.

——— *n.* A musical instrument. 236. See Du Cange, in v. ROCTA. Notker, who lived in the xth century, says, that it was the ancient *Psalterium*, but altered in its shape and with an additional number of strings. Schilter, in v. ROTTA.

——— *n.* FR. Practice. *By rote.* 13452, 75. By heart. *Par rotine.* Cotg.

——— *v.* SAX. To rot. 4405.

ROTEN, *part pa.* 3871.

ROTHER, *n.* SAX. The rudder of a ship. C. D. 1377.

ROUGHT for RAUGHT, *pa. t.* of RECCHE. 8561. T. i. 497.

ROUKE, *v.* SAX. To lie close. 1310. T. v. 409. *But now they* RUCKEN *in her nest.* Conf. Am. 72.

ROULE, *v. neut.* SAX. To roll; to run easily. 6235. Where some copies have *royle*. See REILE.

ROUME, *n.* SAX. Room; space. L. W. 1997.

——— *adj.* Wide; spacious. 4124.

ROUMER, *comp. d.* Wider. 4143.

ROUNCEVALL, *pr. n.* See the n. on ver. 672.

ROUNCIE, *n.* BARB. LAT. A common hackney horse. 392. See Du Cange, in v. RUNCINUS.

ROUNDEL, *n.* FR. A sort of song. 1531. See RONDEL.—A circular figure. F. ii. 283. 290.

ROUTE, *n.* FR. A company. 624. 9424.

——— *v.* To assemble in a company. 4960.

——— *v.* FR. To snore. 3647. 4165.—To roar. F. ii. 530.

ROUTHE, *n.* SAX. Compassion. 11824.—The object of compassion. 11833.

ROUTHELES, *adj.* Without compassion. T. ii. 346.

ROW, *n.* A line *of writing.* F. i. 448. See REW.

——— *adj.* SAX. Rough. 7736. 16329. C. D. 772. *He loked wel* ROWE. R. G. 507

ROWNE, *v.* SAX. To whisper. 5823. 7132.

RUBEUS. 2047. See PUELLA.

RUBINS, *n. pl.* FR. Rubies. 2149.

RUCKING, *part. pa.* of RUCKE, or ROUKE, *v.* SAX. Lying close. 15232.

RUDDE, *n.* SAX. Complexion. 13657. See RODE.

RUDDOCK, *n.* SAX. A bird, called Robin red-breast. A F. 349.

RUFUS, *pr. n.* 432. A Greek physician, of whose works some are extant See Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* L. iv. c. 3.

RUGOY, *adj.* Rough. 2883.

RUSSEL, *pr. n.* The fox is called *Dan Russel* in ver. 15340, from his *red* colour, I suppose.

S.

SACHELLES, *n. pl.* FR. Small sacks. Bo. i. pr. 3

SACKED FRERES. R. 7462. Friars wearing a coarse upper garment called *Saccus*. Mat. Paris, ad an. 1257. *Eodem tempore novus ordo apparuit Londini de quibusdam fratribus ignotis et non prævisis, qui*, quia saccis incedebant induti, FRATRES SACCATI *vocabantur*.

SACRE, *n.* FR. A sacred solemnity. C. D. 2135.

SADE, *adj.* SAX. Grave; steady. 8878. 8923.—Sorrowful; repentant. 16345.

SADLY, *adv.* Steadily; carefully. 2604. This messenger *drank sadly* ale and wine. 5163. This messenger *applied himself to drink* a. & w.

SADNESS, *n.* Gravity: steadiness. 8328. 9465.

SAFFRON, *v.* FR. To tinge with saffron. 12279.

SAIR, for SEIR, *pa. t.* of SE, *v.* SAX. Saw. T. iii. 993.

SAILE, *v.* FR. To assail. R. 7338.

SAILOURS, *n. pl.* R. 770. may mean *Dancers* from the LAT. FR. So in P.P. 68. *For I can—neither* saylen, *ne saute, ne syng to the gyterne.* The lines which Chaucer has here translated are not in the best Edit. of the *Rom. de la Rose.* Paris. 1735. but they are quoted by Junius, *Etym. Ling. Angl.* in v. *Timbestere*, from an Edit. of 1529.

Apres y eut farces joyeuses,
Et batelleurs et batelleuses,
Qui de passe passe jouoyent,
Et en l'air ung bassin ruoyent,
Puis le scavoyent bien recueillir
Sur ung doy, sans point y faillir.

Where it is plain that the author is speaking of *jugglers* rather than *dancers*.

SAINE for SEINE, *part. pa.* of SE, *v.* SAX. Seen. R. 7445.

——— *pr. n.* The river Seine. 11534.

SALADE, *n.* FR. A sort of armour for the head. C. D. 1554.

SALADES, *n. pl.* FR. Sallads of herbs. F. L. 412.

SALEWE, SALUE, *v.* FR. To salute. 1494. 10405.

SALUED, *part. pa.* 11622.

SALUTINGES, *n. pl.* Salutations. T. ii. 1568.

SAMITE, *n.* FR. GR. A rich silk. R. 873. T. i. 109. See Du Cange, in v. EXAMITUS.

SANGUIN, *adj.* FR. Of a blood-red colour. 441. 2170.

SARLINISHE. R. 1188. should perhaps be SARSINISHE, from the FR. *Sarrasinois;* a sort of fine silk used for veils. See Du Cange, in v. SARACENICUM and SARACENUM. It is still called *Sarcenet*.

SARPLERES, *n. pl.* Packages of a larger size than sacks. Bo. i. pr. 3. See Du Cange, in v. SARPLERIUM. *Sarpillère.* FR. A piece of canvas, &c. to wrap or pack up wares in. Cotgrave.

SATEN, *pa. t. pl.* of SIT, *v.* SAX. 2895.

SATALIE, *pr. n.* The ancient Attalia. 58.

SAVE, *n.* LAT. The herb sage. 2716.

SAUF, *adj.* FR. Safe. See VOUCHE.—Saved, or accepted. 685. 12048. 12216.

SAVETE, *n.* FR. Safety. R. 6969.

SAULE for SOULE. 4185. 4261.

SAVOUR, *v. neut.* FR. To taste; to relish. 5753.

SAVOURING, *n.* FR. The sense of tasting. P. 150, col. 2, l. 34.

SAVOUROUS, *adj.* Sweet; pleasant. R. 84.

SAUSEFLEME. See the n. on ver. 627. But MS. Bodl. 2463. furnishes another etymology, which I think still more probable. "Unguentum contra *salsum flegma*, scabiem, &c." See Galen. in Hippoc. de Alimenta. Comment. iii. p. 277. ὁ λαχνη—γινται απο ΦΛΕΓΜΑΤΟΣ 'ΑΛΜΥΡΟΥ και της ξανθης χολης. And again, ὁ αλφος—ἐστι του ΦΛΕΓΜΑΤΟΣ, ουχ 'ΑΛΤΚΟΥ.

SAUTES, *n. pl.* FR. Assaults. B. K. 419.

SAUTRIE, *n.* FR. GR. A musical string-instrument. 3213. 3305. See ROTE.

SAWE, *n.* SAX. Speech; discourse. 1528. 16159. R. 6475.—A proverb, or wise saying. 6242.

SAY for SEY, *pa. t.* of SE, *v.* SAX. Saw. 6227. 9810.

SCALL, *n.* SAX. A scale or scab. Ch. *wordes to his Scrivener.* 3.

SCALLED, *adj.* Scabby; scurfy. 630.

SCANTILONE, *n.* FR. A pattern; a scantling. R. 7114.

SCARCE, *adj.* FR. Sparing; stingy. R. 2329.

SCARIOT, *pr. n.* Judas Iscariot. 15233.

SCARMISHE, *n.* FR. A skirmish; a battle. T. ii. 934. V. 1507.

SCATHE, *n.* SAX. Harm; damage. 448. 9048.

SCATHEFUL, SCATHELICHE, *adj.* Pernicious. 4519. L. W. 1370.

SCATHELES, *adj.* Without harm. R. 1550.

SCLAUNDRE, *n.* FR. Slander. 8598. 8606.

SCLENDRE, *adj.* Slender. 9476.

SCOCHONS, *n. pl.* FR. Scutcheons of arms. F. L. 216.

SCOLAIE, *v.* FR. To attend school; to studie. 304. See the note.

SCRIPT, *n.* FR. A writing. 9571. T. ii. 1130.

SCRIPTURES, *n. pl.* FR. Writings; books. 2046.

SCRIVEN-LIKE. T. ii. 1026. Like a scrivener, or writing-master; *Comme un escrivain.*

SEAMES, *n. pl.* SAX. Seams: *Suturæ.* P. 160, col. 2, l. 19

SECREE, *adj.* FR. Secret. 9783. 15646.

SECRENESSE, *n.* Privacy. 5193.

SECULER, *adj.* FR. Of the laity; in opposition to Clerical 9127. 15456.

SEDE, *v.* SAX. To produce seed. R. 4344.

See, *n.* Fr. A seat. 14155. T. iv. 1023. **Sees**, *pl.* F. iii. 120.
—— *v.* Sax. To see. *God you see!* 7751. *God him see!* 4576. May God keep *you*, or *him*, in his sight! In T. ii. 85. it is fuller:—*God you save and see!*—To look. *On to see.* 3247. To look on. See the note, and T. iii. 130. *That—Ye wolde sometime frendly on me see.* That ye would sometimes look friendly on me.
—— *n.* Sax. The sea. 2458. 3033. *The Grete see.* 59. A learned friend has suggested to me, that the Sea on the coast of Palestine is called *the Great Sea* in the Bible (See Numb. xxxiv. 6, 7. Josh. xv. 12.); which puts the meaning of the appellation in this passage out of all doubt.
Sege, *n.* Fr. A siege. 939.
Seie, **Sey**, *pa. t.* of **See**, *v.* Sax. Saw. 5229. 8990. T. v. 816.—*part. pa.* Seen. 6134.
Seignorie, *n.* Fr. Power. R 3213.
Sein, *part. pa.* of **See**, *v.* Sax. Seen. 10267.
Seinde, *part. pa.* of **Senge**, *v.* Sax. Singed. 14851.
Seint, *n.* Fr. *Ceinct.* A girdle. 331. 3235.
Seintuarie, *n.* Fr. Sanctuary. 12887.
Seke, *v.* Sax. To seek. 13. 17.
—— *v. adj.* Sax. Sick. 18.
Selden, *adv.* Sax. Seldom. 10125. *Selden time.* 8022.
Sele, *n.* Fr. A seal. 7710. **Seles**, *pl.* T. iii. 1468.
Self, **Selve**, *adj.* Sax. answering to the Belg. *Self*, the Fr. *Même*, the Lat. *Ipse*, and the Gr. Αὐτός. See the Essay, &c. n. 30.—With the article prefixed it answers to the Lat. *Idem*, and the Goth. *Samo*, from whence our *Same*. See ver. 2586. *In* the selve *moment;* In *the same* moment. ver. 11706. *In* the selve *place;* In *the same* place.

These two usages of the *adj.* **Self**, when *joined to a substantive*, might be confirmed by the uniform practice of all our writers, from the earliest times down to Shakespeare; but, as they are both now obsolete, I choose rather to take this opportunity of adding a few words to what has been said in the Essay, &c. *loc. cit.* upon the usage of the *adj.* **Self**, when joined to a *Pronoun;* in which light only it appears to have been considered by Wallis, when he pronounced it a *Substantive*, answering nearly to the Latin *persona*.

Dr. Johnson, in his Dictionary, has very rightly established *the primary signification* of **Self** to be that of an *Adjective;* but, in its connexions with Pronouns, he seems rather inclined to suppose it a *Substantive*, first, because it is joined to *possessive*, or *adjective* pronouns, as *my, thy, her*, &c. and secondly, because it has a plural number *selves*, contrary to the nature of the English adjective.

The latter reason, I think, cannot have much weight, when it is remembered, that the use of *Selves*, as the plural number of *Self*, has been introduced into our language since the time of Chaucer. *Selven*, which was originally the *accusative ca. sing.* of **Self**, is used by him indifferently in both numbers. *I myselven.* 9334. *Ye yourselven.* 9380. 12676. *He himselven.* 4434. 9919.

The former reason also will lose its force, if the hypothesis, which I have ventured to propose in the Essay, &c. *loc. cit.* shall be admitted, viz. that, in their combinations with *Self*, the pronouns *my, thy, her, our, your*, are not to be considered as *possessive* or *adjective*, but as the old *oblique cases* of the personal pronouns *I, thou, she, we, ye*. According to this hypothesis, the use of these combinations, with respect to the pronouns, is almost always solecistical; but not more so than that of *himself* in the *nominative* case, which has long been authorised by constant custom; and it is remarkable, that a solecism of the same sort has prevailed in the French language, in which *moi* and *toi*, the *obl. cases* of *je* and *tu*, when combined with *même*, are used as ungrammatically as our *my* and *thy* have just been supposed to be, when combined with *Self*. *Je l'ai vu moi-même;* I have seen it myself: *Tu le verras toi-même;* Thou shalt see it thyself; and so in the *accusative* case, *moi-même* is added emphatically to *me*, and *toi-même* to *te*.

It is probable, I think, that these departures from grammar, in both languages, have been made for the sake of fuller and more agreeable sounds. *Je-même, me-même, tu-même*, and *te-même*, would certainly sound much thinner and more languid than *moi-même* and *toi-même;* and *myself, thyself*, &c. are as clearly preferable, in point of pronunciation, to *Iself, meself, thouself, theeself*, &c. though not all, perhaps, in an equal degree. It should be observed, that *itself*, where a change of case in the pronoun would not have improved the sound, has never undergone any alteration.

Selle, *n.* Fr. *Celle.* Cell. C. D. 2064.
Selle for **Sille**, *n.* Sax. A door-sill or threshold. 3820. See the note.
Selve, *adj.* 2586. 2862. See **Self**.
Sely, *adj.* Sax. Silly, simple; harmless. 4088. 4106. [illegible]
Selynesse, *n.* Sax. Happiness. T. iii. 815. 827.
Semblable, *adj.* Fr. Like. 9374.
Semblaunt, *n.* Fr. Seeming; appearance. 10830.
Semeliche, **Semely**, *adj.* Sax. Seemly; comely. **Semelieste**, *superl. d.* 17068.
Semelyhede, *n.* Seemliness; comeliness. R. 777 1130.
Semisoun, *n.* Lat. A low, or broken tone. 3697.
Semicope, *n.* A half, or short, cloke. 264.
Sen, **Sene**, *inf. m.* of **Se**. 1711. 2178.—*part. pa.* 1967. 2300.
Send for **Sendeth**. 4134.
Sendall, *n.* 442. A thin silk. See Du Cange, in v. **Cendalum**.
Senek, *pr. n.* Seneca, the philosopher. 6750, 6767. 9397. What is said of him in the *Monkes tale*, ver. 14421—14436. is taken from the *Rom. de la Rose*, ver. 6461—6499.
Senge, *v.* Sax. To singe. 5931.
Senior, *pr. n.* 16918. See the note.
Sentence, *n.* Fr. Sense; meaning. 308. 10162.—Judgement. 4533.
Septe, *pr. n.* 5367. Ceuta, formerly *Septa*, in Africa, over-against Gibraltar.
Sepulture, *n.* Fr. Grave, T. iv. 327.
Serapion, *pr. n.* 434. Joannes Serapion, an Arabian physician of the xith Century. Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* t. xiii. p. 229.
Sere, *adj.* Sax. Dry. R. 4749.
Sergeant, *n.* Fr. A Squier, attendant upon a prince or nobleman. 8395.—A **sergeant of the lawe**. See his **Character**, ver. 311—332. His name is derived from his having been originally *a servant* of the King in his law-business; *Serviens ad legem*, just as *Serviens ad arma*. The King had formerly a Serjeant in every county. Spelman, in v **Serviens**.
Serie, *n.* Fr. Series. 3069.
Sermoning, *n.* Fr. Preaching 3093.
Servage, *n.* Fr. Servitude; slavery. 4788. 11106, 7.
Servand, *part. pr.* of **Serve**. Serving. C. D. 1627.
Serve, *v.* Fr. To serve. 8845.—To behave to. 8516, 7.
Set for **Setteth**. 7564. for **Sette**, *pa. t.* 11124.
Setewale, *n.* Sax The herb Valerian. 3207. 13691.
Sethe, *v.* Sax. To boil. 385.
Sethe for **Sethed**, *pa. t.* 8103.
Sette, *v.* Sax. To place; to put. 7851. *Setteth him doun* P. 170, col. 1, l. 10. Placeth himself on a seat. *Yet sette I cas.* M. 115, col. 1, l. 54. Yet I put the case, or suppose.—To put a value on a thing; to rate. *I n'olde sette his sorrow at a myte.* T. iii. 902. I would not value his sorrow.—*To sette a man's cappe;* to make a fool of him. See the n. on ver. 588.
—— *pa. t.* 6241.
Seurement, *n.* Fr. Security, in a legal sense, 11838.
Seuretee, *n.* Fr. Certainty. 6485.—Surety, in a legal sense. 6493.
Sewe, *v.* Fr. To follow. R. 4953.
Sewes, *n. pl.* Fr. Dishes. 10381. See the note.
Seye. See **Seie**.
Shadde, *pa. t.* of **Shede**, *v.* Sax. Fell in drops. 14649.
—— *pa. t.* of **Shade**, *v.* Sax. Shaded; covered with shade. Du. 426.
Shadowy, *adj.* Sax. Unsubstantial. Bo iii. pr. 4.
Shaft, *n.* Sax. An arrow. 1364.
Shal, *auxil. v.* Sax. is used sometimes with an ellipsis of the infinitive mode, which ought to follow it. 10912. *Beth swiche as I have ben to you and* shal, i. e. *shall be.* 15771. *First tell me whither I* shal, i. e. *shall go.* T. ii.

46. *Yet all is don or* shal, i. e. *shall be done.* See also ver. 15100. T. v. 833.

SHALE, *n.* SAX. A shell, or husk. F. iii. 191. *But all n'is worthe a nutte* SHALE. Conf. Am. 66.

SHALMIES, *n. pl.* Shalms; Musical string-instruments, otherwise called *Psalteries* or *Sautries.* F. iii. 128. See ROTE.

SHAME, *n.* SAX. *Shames dethe.* 5239. 10251. A death of shame; a shameful death. *To York he did him lede,* SCHAMES DEDE *to dede.* P. L. 247.

SHAMEFAST, *adj.* SAX. Modest. 2057.

SHAPE, *n.* SAX. Form; figure. 7040. 7052.

SHAPELICH, *adj.* SAX. Fit; likely. 374. T. iv. 1452.

SHAPEN, SHAPE, *part. pa.* of SHAPE, *v.* SAX. Formed; figured. 7045. 7096. Prepared. 1110. 1227. 1394.

SHAWE, *n.* SAX. A shade of trees; a grove. 4365. 6968. T. iii. 721.

SHEFE, *n.* SAX. A bundle. A sheaf of arrowes 104. SHEVES, *pl.* of corn. R. 4335.

SHEFELD *pr. n.* Sheffield, in Yorkshire. 3631.

SHELD, *n.* SAX. A shield. 2124. SHELDES, *pl.* French crowns, called in FR. *Ecus,* from their having on one side the figure of a shield. 280. 13261.

SHEMERING, *n.* SAX. A glimmering. 4295.

SHEND, *v.* SAX. To ruin. 5347. P. 162, col. 1, l. 42.

SHENDSHIP, *n.* Ruin; punishment. P. 152, col. 1, l. 22.

SHENE, *adj.* SAX. Bright; shining. 1070.

SHENT, *part. pa.* of SHEND. 5351. 9194.

SHEPEN, *n.* SAX. A stable. 2002. 6453. See the n. on ver. 2002.

SHERE, *v.* SAX. To cut.—To shave. R. 6196.

SHERTE, n. SAX. A shirt. 9859. *I hadde lever than my sherte.* 15126. I would give my shirt, i. e. all that I have. —It seems to mean the linen in which a new-born child is wrapped. 1568. *That shapen was my dethe erst than my sherte.* Compare T. iii. 734.

> *O fatal sustren, whiche,* or any clothe
> Me shapen was, *my destinee me sponne*—

and L. W. 2618.

> *Sens first that day,* that shapen was my sherte,
> *Or by the fatal suster had my dome.*—

In T. iv. 96. *Alas! that I ne had brought her in my sherte!* it seems to be put for *skirt* (or lap), which perhaps was the original word.

SHETE, *v.* SAX. To shoot. 3926. R. 989.

SHETES, *n. pl.* SAX. Sheets. 4138.

SHETTE, SHET. *v.* SAX. To close, or shut. 15985. 16605.

——— SHET, *pa. t.* and *part.* 2599. 3499. *So was hire herte shette in hire distresse.* 5476. So was her heart overwhelmed with h. d.

SHIFT, *v.* SAX. To divide. 5686.

SHILDE, SHELDE, *v.* SAX. To shield. *God shilde.* 3427. God shield, or forbid!

SHIPMAN, *n.* SAX. A mariner; the master of a barge. See his CHARACTER, ver. 390—412.

SHIVER, *n.* SAX. A small slice. 7422.

SHODE, *n.* SAX. The hair of a man's head. 2009. 3316.

——— *part. pa.* of SHOE, *v.* SAX. Shod, having shoes on. R. 7463.

SHOFE, *pa. t.* of SHOVE, *v.* SAX Pushed. R. 534. L. W. 2401.

SHONDE, *n.* SAX. Harm. 13836. F. i. 88.

SHOPE, *pa. t.* of SHAPE. 7120. 11121.

SHORE, *part. pa.* of SHERE. 13958.

SHORTE, *v.* SAX. To make short. P. 163, col. 1, l. 21.

SHOT, *part. pa.* of SHETTE. Shut. 3358. 3695. See the n. on ver. 3358.

SHOTER, *n.* SAX. A shooter. A. F. 180. The yew-tree is called *Shoter,* because bows are usually made of it.

SHOTTES, *n. pl.* SAX. Arrows, darts; any thing that is shot. T. ii. 58.

SHOVE, SHOWVE, *v.* SAX. To push. 3910.

——— *part. pa.* 11593.

SHREWE, *v.* SAX. To curse. 6644. 7809.

——— *n.* SAX. An ill-tempered, *curst* man, or woman. 5947. 6087. 10302. SHREWES, *pl.* Bo. i. pr. 3. *Pessimi.* Orig.

SHREWED, *adj.* SAX. Wicked. *Shrewde folk.* Bo. i. pr. 4. *Impios.* Orig.

SHREWEDNESSE, *n.* SAX. Ill-nature. T. ii. 898.

SHRIFT, *n.* SAX. Confession. P. 169, col. 2, l. 11.

SHRIFTE-FADERS, *n. pl.* SAX. Father-confessors. 7024.

SHRIVE *v.* SAX. To make confession. P. 170, col. 1, l. 41.

SHRIVEN, *part. pa.* 7022. *I have ben shriven this day of my curat.* 7677. I have made my confession t. d. to my curate. P. 170, col. 1, l. 70.

SHRIGHT for SHRICHETH. 2819. Shrieketh.

——— *pa. t.* of SHRICH, *v.* SAX. Shrieked. 10731. 15368.

SHROUDE, *v.* SAX. To hide. B. K. 148.

SHULDE, *pa. t.* of SHAL. Should. 964. See the Essay, &c. p. xxvii. n. 35. SHULDEN, *pl.* 747. 3229.

SHULLEN, SHULN, SHUL, *ind. m. pr. t. pl.* of SHAL. 3916. 2766. 1823, 4. M. 111, col. 1, l. 5.

SIBRE, *adj.* SAX. Related; allied. M. 113, col 2, l. 40.

SIE for SEIE. Saw. 11162. F. L. 194.

SIFT, *v.* SAX. To shake in a sive. 16409.

SIGH for SEIE. Saw. R. 818.

SIGHTE, *pa. t.* of SIKE. 5455. R. 1746. Sighed.

SIGNE, *v.* FR. To appoint. C. L. 642.

SIGNIFER, *n.* LAT. The Zodiack. T. v. 1020.

SIGNIFIAUNCE, *n.* FR. Signification. T. v. 1446.

SIKE, *adj.* SAX. Sick. 426. 9165. In ver. 5976. it seems to be used, as a noun, for *Sickness.*

——— *v.* SAX. To sigh. 2987. 11316.

——— *n.* SAX. A sigh. 10812. SIKES, *pl.* 1922. 11176.

SIKER, *adj.* SAX. Sure. 9264. 9589.

SIKERDE, *part. pa.* of SIKER, *v.* SAX. Assured. L. W. 2128.

SIKERNESSE, *n.* Security. 9156.

SIKERLY, *adv.* Surely. 13084. 13213.

SIMPLESSE, *n.* FR. Simplicity. R. 954.

SIN, *adv.* SAX. abbreviation of SITHEN. Since. 5234. 10181.

SINAMOME, *n.* FR. Cinnamon. 3699.

SIP, *n.* SAX. Drink. An. 195.

SIPHER, *n.* A cipher, or figure of *o,* in Arithmetic. *Although* a sipher in augrim *have no might in signification of itselfe, yet he yeveth power in signification to other.* T. L. ii. 333. b. There is another passage in Du. ver. 435—40. which seems to implie, that, in Chaucer's time, the numerals, commonly called Arabian, had not been long in use in this country.

SIRE, *n.* FR. *Sieur, Seigneur.* A respectful title, given formerly to men of various descriptions, as well as to knights. *Sire knight.* 839. *Sire clerk.* 842. *Sire monk.* 3120. *Sire man of lawe.* 4453. It was so usually given to *priests,* that it has crept even into acts of parliament. *Rot. Parl.* 12. and 13. E. IV. n. 14. *Sir* James Thekeness, *Preste.* 1. H. VII. p. 11. *Sir* Oliver Langton, *Prest. Sir* Robert Naylesthorp, *Prest.* Hence a *Sir John* came to be a nickname for *a Priest.* See ver. 14816, and the note.—*Sire* is sometimes put for *personage.* R. 4998. *And melancholy, that angry* sire.—*Our sire.* 6295. Our husband; our goodman; as the French, in their old familiar language, use *Notre sire.*

SIS, *n.* FR. The cast of six; the highest cast upon a die. 14579.

SIT for SITTETH. 3641. 9808. *It sit me not to lie.* 10189. It doth not become me t. l. 8335. 9153. *It syt a kynge wel to be chast.* Conf. Am. 168. b.

SITHE for SITHES, *n. pl.* SAX. Times. 5153. 5575.

SITHEN, SITH, *adv.* SAX. Since. 1817. 4478. 5541.

SITHES, *n. pl.* SAX. Scythes. T. L. prol.

SITTE, *v.* SAX. To sit.—To become; to suit with. See SIT

SITTAND, *part. pr.* R. 2263.

SITTEN, *part. pa.* 1454. 6002.

SKAFFAUT, *n.* FR. A scaffold; a wooden tower. R. 4175.

SKAFFOLD, *n.* A scaffold, or stage. 3384.

SKIE, *n.* SAX. A cloud. F. iii. 510.

SKILL, *n.* SAX. Reason. 9028. 9552. SKILLES, *pl.* 10519.

SKILFUL, *adj.* Reasonable. T. iii. 288. 940.

SKINKE, *v.* SAX. To pour out; to serve with drink. 9596

SKIPTE, *pa. t.* of SKIPPE, *v.* SAX. Leaped. 11714.

SKOGAN, *pr. n.* See the Account, &c. p. 449.

SKORCLE, *v.* SAX. To scorch. Bo. ii. m. 6.

SKRIPPE, *n.* FR. *Escharpe.* A scrip. R. 7405.

SLACKE, *adj.* SAX. Slow. 2903.

SLAIN, *part. pa.* of SLE. 1743. 2040.

SLAKE, *v.* SAX. To appease; to make slack 8678. 8903.

Slake, *v. neut.* To fail. 8013. To desist. 8581.
Slawe, *part. pa.* of Sle. 15020.
Sle, *v.* Sax. To kill; to slay. 2558.
Sleer, *n.* Sax. A killer. 2007. L. W. 1367.
Sleighly, *adv.* Sax. Cunningly. 1446.
Sleight, *n.* Sax Contrivance. R. 7109.
Sleightes, *pl.* R. 7121. *Suche* sleightes *as I shall you neven.*—So this line should probably be written. See the Orig. ver. 12495. *Neven* is from MS. Hunter.
Slen, *pr. t. pl.* of Sle. 1569. 5384.—*inf. m.* 1565. 5379.
Slep, **Slepe**, *pa. t.* of Slepe, *v.* Sax. Slept. 98. 399.
Slete, *n.* Sax. Sleet; a mixture of rain and snow. 11562. R. 2651.
Slevelesse, *adj.* T. L. ii. 334. seems to signifie *idle, unprofitable;* as it does still in vulgar language.
Slider, *adj.* Sax. Slippery. 1266. L. W. 648.
Sliding, *part. pr.* Uncertain. 16200. Lydg. *Trag.* 99. b. *Sliding fortune.* Bo. i. m. 5. *Lubrica fortuna.* Orig.
Slie, **Sligh**, *adj.* Sax. Cunning. 3392.
Slike for **Swilke**, *adj.* Sax. Such. 4128.
Slit for **Slideth**. 16150.
—— *v.* Sax. To cut through, to cleave. 11572.
Slives, *n.* Sax. A small slice, or piece. T. iii. 1015.
Slo, *v.* Sax. To slay. R. 1953. 4592.
Slogardie, *n.* Fr. Sax. Sloth. 1044.
Slomberinges, *n. pl.* Sax. Slumberings. T. v. 246.
Sloppe, *n.* Sax. A sort of breeches. 16101. P. 155, col. 2, l. 50.
Slow, *pa. t.* of Slo. Slew. 11745. 14104.
Slowe, *n.* Sax. A moth. R. 4751. In the Orig. Fr. *Taigne.*
Sluggy, *adj.* Sax. Sluggish. P. 162, col. 2, l. 27.
Smalish, *adj.* Sax. Diminutive of *Smale*, or *Small.* R. 826.
Smerte, *v.* Sax. To smart; to suffer pain. R. 7107.
——— 149. seems to be used as an *Adverb;* Smartly. P. L. Gl. v. *Forthought.*
Smit for **Smiteth**, *ind. m.* 3 *pers. sing.* 7998.
Smiteth, *imp. m.* 2 *pers. pl.* Smite ye. 784.
Smithe, *v.* Sax. To forge, as a smith. 3760. P. P. 16 b.
Smitted for **Smitten**, *part. pa.* of Smite. T. v. 1544.
Smokles, *adj.* Sax. Without a smock. 8751.
Smoterlich, *adj.* 3961. means, I suppose, smutty, dirty. But the whole passage is obscure.
Snewe, *v.* Sax. To snow; to be in as great abundance as snow. 347.
Snibbe, *v.* Sax. To snubb; to reprove. 525. 11000.
Snow-white, *adj.* Sax. White as snow. 15722. 17082.
Soden, *adj.* Sax. Sudden. 4841.
Soget, *n.* Fr. Subject. C. L. 93.
Soigne, *n.* Fr. Care. R. 3882.
Sojour, *n.* Fr. Stay; abode. R. 4282.
Soken, *n.* Sax. Toll. 3965.
Sokingly, *adv.* Suckingly; gently. M. 116, col. 2, l. 14. See Souke.
Solas, *n.* Fr. Mirth; sport. 800. 3654.
Solein, *adj.* Fr. One; single. Du. 982.—Sullen. R. 3897.
Solempne, *adj.* Fr. Solemn. 10425.
Solempnely, *adv.* Solemnly. 376.
Soler hall. See the n. on ver. 3968. *A solere windowe* occurs in *Gam.* ver. 267. for *the window of a loft*, or garret. See before, ver. 252.
Som, *adj.* Sax. Some. *This is all and som.* 5673. This is the whole. *All and some.* 8817 T. ii. 1149. One and all.
Soxdel, *adv.* Sax. Somewhat; in some measure. 448. 3909.
Somer, *pr. n.* In the treatise on the Astrolabe, fol. 291. b. Chaucer professes to make use of *the Kalenders of the reverent clerkes frere* John Somer *and frere* Nicholas Lenne. The Kalendar of *John Somur* is extant in MS. *Cotton*, Vesp. E. vii. It is calculated for 140 years from 1367, the year of the birth of Richard II, and is said, in the introduction, to have been published in 1380, at the instance of Joan mother to the King. The Kalendar of *Nicholas Lenne*, or *Lynne*, was calculated for 76 years from 1387. Tanner in v. Nicolaus Linensis. The story there quoted from Hakluit of a voyage made by this Nicholas in 1360 *ad insulas septentrionales antehac Europæis incognitas*, and of a book written by him to describe those countries *a gradu* 54. *usque ad polum*, is a mere fable; as appears from the very authorities which Hakluit has produced in support of it.
Somme. T. ii. 1249. *Lo! Troilus—*

Come riding with his tenthe somme *ifere.*

So this line stands in the Editt. but a Ms. quoted in Gloss. *Ur.* instead of *tenthe* has x. and MS. I. *tenteth.* Perhaps the original reading was xx. *With his twenty some ifere*, according to the Saxon mode of expression would signifie *Together with some twenty of his attendants.* See Hickes, Gramm. A. S. p. 32, 3.
——— *n.* Fr. A sum. Bo. iv. pr. 2.
Sommer, *n.* Sax. Summer. *A Sommer-game.* 6230. See the note.
Somone, **Sompne**, *v.* Lat. To summon. 7159. 6929, 43.
Sompnour, *n.* An officer employed to summon delinquents to appear in Ecclesiastical courts, now called an Apparitor. See his Character, ver. 625—670.
Sond, *n.* Sax. Sand. 15273.
———*n.* C. D. 1147. seems to signifie *a sounding line;* from the Fr. *Sonde.*
Sonde, *n.* Sax. A message. 4808. 5469. *Goddes sonde.* 4943. 13149. What God has sent; God's gift.
Sone, *adv.* Sax. Soon. 12002, 4.
——— *n.* Sax. A son. 79. 338. Sones, *pl.* 10343.
Sonken, *part. pa.* of Sink, *v.* Sax. Sunk. R. 5113.
Sonne, *n.* Sax. The Sun. 1511. 2524.
Sonnish, *adj.* Sax. Like the Sun, T. iv. 736. See ver. 11971, 2.
Sooty, *adj.* Sax. Foul with soot. 14838.
Sop, *n.* Fr. A piece of bread dipped in any sort of liquor. 336. 9717. *He toke a* soppe. *Conf. Am.* 104.
Sophime, *n.* Fr. Gr. A sophism, a subtle fallacy. 7881. 10868.
Sore, *v.* Fr. *Essorer.* To soar. T. i. 671.
Sort, *n.* Fr. Chance; destiny. 846. T. ii. 754.
Sorted, *pa. t.* of Sort, *v.* Fr. Allotted. T. v. 1826.
Sorwe, *n.* Sax. Sorrow. 1221. 2824.
Sory, *adj.* Sax. Sorrowful. 3618, 9. *Sory grace.* 6328. Misfortune. See Grace, and With.
Sote, *n.* Sax. Soot. T. iii. 1200.
—— **Swote**, *adj.* Sax. Sweet. 3205. 3691.
—— *n.* Fr. A fool. F. L. 101.
Soted, *part. pa.* Fr. Fooled; besotted. 16809.
Sotel, *adj.* Fr. Subtle; artfully contrived. 1056.
Soth, *adj.* Sax. True. 4355. Certain. 3885. **Sother**, *comp. d.* 15682.
——— **Sothly**, *adv.* 1523. 1627. 1186. 1201. Truly.
Sothe, *n.* Sax. Truth. 3922. 6513.
Sothfastness, *n.* Sax. Truth. 17344.
Sotherne, *adj.* Sax. Southern. 17353.
Sothness, *n.* Sax. Truth; reality. 15729.
Soth-saw, *n.* Veracity; true-saying. R. 6125.
Soudan, *n.* A Sultan; any Mahometan Sovereign. 4597. See D'Herbelot, in v. Solthan.
Soudannesse, *n.* The wife of a Sultan. 4778.
Souded, *part. pa.* See the note on ver. 13509. **Sowdemetel**. *Consolidum.* Prompt. Parv.
Soveraine, *adj.* Fr. Excellent; in a high degree. 15215.
Soverainly, *adv.* Above all. 15368.
Souke, *v.* Fr. To suck. 4155.
Souked, *part. pa.* 8326.
Souled, *part. pa.* Sax. Endued with a soul. 15797.
Soun, *n.* Fr. Sound; noise. 7815. 12487.
Sounde, *v.* Sax. To make sound; to heal. *An.* 245.—*v. neut.* To grow sound. R. K. 293.
Sounie, *v.* Fr. To sound. 567. *As fer as soundeth into honestee.* 13973. As far as is consonant to h. *That soundeth unto gentilitesse of love.* 10831. That is consonant to g. o l.
Souning, *part. pr.* 377. 309.
Soupe, *v* Fr. To sup; to take the evening-meal. 11529. **Soupen** *pl.* 10611.
Souper, *n* Supper; the evening-meal. 350. 10604
Souple, *adj.* Fr. Supple; pliant. 203.
Sourde, *v.* Fr. To rise. P. 156, col. 1, l. 66.

SOURS, *n.* A rise; a rapid ascent. 7520, 3. F. ii. 36. 43.—The source of a stream of water. 7925.

SOUTER, *n.* LAT. A cobler. 3902.

SOWE, *v.* LAT. To sew. T. ii. 1201, 3. It was usual, and indeed necessary, formerly to *sew* letters, when they were written upon parchment. But the practice continued long after the invention of paper.

——— *v.* SAX. To sow. 17346, 7.

SOWERS, *n. pl.* Sores; Bucks in their fourth year. Du. 429.

SPAN-NEWE, *adj.* T. iii. 1671. seems to signifie *Quite new;* but *why* it does so, I cannot pretend to say.

SPANNISHING, *n.* FR. *Espanouissement.* The full blow of a flower. R. 3633.

SPARE, *v.* SAX. To refrain. 7017. L. W. 2591.

SPARETH, *imp. m.* 2 *pers. pl.* 6919. 7004.

SPARANDE, *part. pr.* Sparing; niggardly. R. 5363.

SPARHAUK, *n.* SAX. A sparrow-hawk. 15463.

SPARRE, *n.* SAX. A wooden bar. 992.

SPARRED, *part. pa.* Barred; bolted. R. 3320.

SPARTHE, *n.* SAX. An ax, or halberd. R. 5978. See Du Cange, in v. SPARTH, SECURIS DANICA.

SPECES, *n. pl.* FR. Sorts, or kinds. 3015.

SPEDE, *v.* FR. To dispatch. Bo. v. pr. 4, 5.

SPEDEFUL, *adj.* Effectual. Bo. iv. pr. 4. v. pr. 4.

SPEKTAKEL, *n.* FR. LAT. A spying glass. 6785.

SPELL, *n.* SAX. Sport; play. 4355. See the note.—Tale, or history. 13821.

SPENCE, *n.* FR. *Despence.* A store-room for wine, or victuals. 7513.

SPERE, *n.* FR. A sphere. 11592.

——— *n.* SAX. A spear. 2712.

SPERED. R. 2099. SPERRED. T. v. 531. as *Sparred.*

SPERME, *n.* FR. GR. Seed. 14015.

SPICED. 528. 6017. See the note. I have since met with a passage, in which *spiced*, applied to *conscience*, seems to signifie *nice, scrupulous.* Beaumont and Fletcher. *Mad Lover.* Act 3. When *Cleanthe* offers a purse, the *Priestess* says,

"Fy! no corruption ———
Cle. Take it; it is yours;
Be not so *spiced;* it is good gold;
And goodness is no gall to the conscience."

SPICES. P. 148, col. 1, l. 20. as *Speces.*

SPILLE, *v.* SAX. To waste; to throw away. 17102.—To destroy. 6480.—*v. neut.* To perish. 5007. 5235.

SPIRE, *n.* A stake. T. ii. 1335. a corruption probably of *Spere.* SAX.

SPIRED. See the n. on ver. 13733.

SPITOUS, *adj.* FR. *Despiteux.* Angry; spightful. R. 979.

SPITOUSLY, *adv.* Angrily. 3476. 5805.

SPLAIE, *v.* FR. *Desploier.* To unfold. B. K. 33.

SPONE, *n.* SAX. A spoon. 10916.

SPONNE, *pa. t.* of SPINNE, *v.* SAX. Spun. T. iii. 735.

SPORE, *n.* SAX. A spur. 2605.

SPORNE, *v.* SAX. To strike the foot against any thing. 4278. T. ii. 797.

SPOUSAILE, *n.* FR. Marriage. 7991. 8055.

SPRAY, *n.* SAX. A twig, or sprig. 13700.

SPREINT, *part. pa.* of SPRENGE, *v.* SAX. Sprinkled. 4842. 13570.

SPRINGOLDS, *n. pl.* FR. *Espringalle.* Machines for casting stones and arrows. R. 4191. See Du Cange, in v. MUSCHETTA.

SQUAMES, *n. pl.* LAT. Scales. 16227.

SQUAIMOUS. 3337. See the note.

SQUIER, *n.* FR. A squire. See his CHARACTER, ver. 79—100.

——— *v.* To attend as a squire. 5887.

SQUIERIE, *n.* A number of squires. 10607. *And alle ther* SQUIERIE. P. L. 241. *And of his* SQUIERIE *gentille men auhtene.* Ibid. 289.

STACK, *pr. n.* Statius, the Roman poet. 2296.

STACKE, *n.* SAX. A stack of wood, &c. P. 166, col. 1, l. 19.

——— *pa. t.* of STICK, *v.* SAX. Stuck. R. 458.

STAFF-SLING. 13758. means, I suppose, a sling fastened to a staff. Lydgate in his *Trag.* 39. b. describes David as armed

"*With a* STAFFE SLYNGE, *voyde of plate and mayle.*"

STAKER, *v.* SAX. To stagger. L. W. 2676.

STALKE, *v.* SAX. To step slowly. 8401. *Ful thefely gan he* STALKE. L. W. 1779. *And to the bedde he* STALKETH *stylle. Conf. Am.* 32.

STALKES, *n. pl.* SAX. The upright pieces of a ladder. 3823.

STAMEN, STAMIN, *n.* FR. *Estamine.* A sort of woollen cloth. P. 171, col. 2, l. 25. L. W. 2349.

STANT for STANDETH. 3677. 3695.

STARFE, *pa. t.* of STERVE. Died. 935. 14141.

STARK, *adj.* SAX. Stiff, stout. 9332. 14376.

STARLINGES, *n. pl.* Pence of sterling money. 12841. See ver. 12864.

STAUNCHE, *v.* FR. To stop; to satisfie. Bo. iii. pr. 3. m. 3.

STELE, *n.* SAX. A handle. 3783.

STELLIFIE, *v.* LAT. To make a star. L. W. 525. F. ii. 78.

STENTE, *v.* SAX. To cease; to desist. 905.

STENTEN, *part. pa.* 2970.

STEPE, *adj.* 201. 755. seems to be used in the sense of *deep;* so that *eyen stepe* may signifie *eyes sunk deep in the head.*

STERE, *v.* SAX. To stir. 12280.

STERE, *n.* SAX. A young bullock. 2151.—A rudder. 4868. 5253.

STERELES, *adj.* SAX. Without a rudder. 4859.

STERESMAN, *n.* SAX. A pilot. F. i. 436.

STERNE, *n.* SAX. A rudder. F. i. 437.

STERNE, *adj.* SAX. Fierce; cruel. 2612.

STERRE, *n.* SAX. A star. 2063.

STERT, *n.* SAX. A leap. *At a stert.* 1707. Immediately.

STERTE, *pa. t.* of STERTE, *v.* SAX. Leaped. 11689. Escaped, ran away. T. iv. 93.

STERTING, *part. pr.* Leaping nimbly. 1504.

STERTLING, as STERTING. L. W. 1202. 1739.

STERVE, *v.* SAX. To die; to perish. 12799.

STEVEN, *n.* SAX. Voice; sound. 2564. 15297.—A time of performing any action, previously fixed by message, order, summons, &c. *At unset steven.* 1526. Without any previous appointment. *They setten steven.* 4381. They appointed a time.

STEWE, *n.* FR. A small pond for fish. 351.—A small closet. T. iii. 602. 699. STEWES, *pl.* Stews, baudy-houses. 1239.

STEYE, *v.* SAX. To ascend. T. L. i. 315 b.

STEYERS, *n. pl.* SAX. Stairs. T. L. i. 315. b.

STIBBORNE, *adj.* Stubborn. 6038. 6219.

STIKE, *v.* SAX. To stick; pierce. 2548.

STILE, *n.* SAX. A set of steps, to pass from one field to another. *By stile and eke by strete.* 12628. Everywhere; in town and country.

STILLATORIE, *n.* FR. A still. 16048.

STILLE, *adj.* SAX. Quiet. 11782.

STITHE, *n.* SAX. An anvil. 2028.

STIVES. 6914. as STEWES.

STOBLE-GOOS. 4349. A goose fed on stubble-grounds.

STOCKED, *part. pa.* Confined. T. iii. 381.

STOLE, *n.* FR. LAT. Part of the ecclesiastical habit, worn about the neck. 9577. See Du Cange, in v. STOLA. 2.

———, *n.* SAX. A stool. 5870.

STONDEN, *part. pa.* of STONDE, or STANDE, *v.* SAX. Stood. 9368.

STONT, for STONDETH. 3921.

STOPEN, *part. pa.* of STEPE, *v.* SAX. Stepped; advanced. 9388. 14827.

STORE. 10241. See the note.

——— *n.* FR. To stock, or furnish. 13203.

——— *n.* Any thing laid up for use. Hence the phrase, *to tell no store* of a thing. 5785. 15160. means, *to consider it as of no use or importance.*

STORIAL, *adj.* FR. Historical; true. 3179.

STORVEN, *pa. t. pl.* of STERVE. 12820.

STOT, *n.* SAX. See the n. on ver. 617.

STOTE, *n.* A species of weasel; a polecat. 7212.

STOUND, *n.* SAX. A moment; a short space of time. 1214. 4005. *In a stound.* 3990. On a sudden. *In stound.* R. 1733. should probably be *In a stound.* The Orig. Fr. has *tantost.* STOUNDES, *pl.* Times; seasons. 5868. T. iii. 1758.

STOUNDEMELE, *adv.* Momentarily; every moment. R. 2304. T. v. 674.

STOUPEN. 14827. should probably be STOPEN.

STOURE, *n.* SAX. Fight; battle. 14376. T. iii. 1066.

STRAKE, *v.* SAX. To proceed directly. Du. 1312. Stracken. Stricken. *Tendere.* Kilian.

Strange, *adj.* Fr. Foreign. 10403.—Uncommon. 10381. *He made it strange.* 3978. 11535. He made it a matter of difficulty, or nicety.

Straughte, *pa. t.* of **Strecche**, *v.* Sax. Stretched. 2918. *Conf. Am.* 184.

Stre, *n.* Sax. Straw. 2920.

Streight, *part. pa.* of **Strecche**, *v.* Sax. Stretched. Bo. iii. pr. 1.

Streine, *v.* Fr. To constrain. 15255.—To press closely. 9627.

Streite, *adj.* Fr. Strait. *Streite sword.* 15363.

Stremeden, *pa. t. pl.* of **Streme**, *v.* Sax. Streamed; flowed. T. iv. 247.

Stremes, *n. pl.* The rays of the Sun. 1497.

Strene, *n.* Sax. Stock; race; progeny, 8038. R. 4859.

Strengest-faithed, *adj.* Endowed with the strongest faith. T. i. 1008.

Strepe, *v.* Fr. To strip. R. 6818.

Strete, *n.* Sax. A street. 3758. *The maister strete.* 2904. See the note.

Strike, *n.* Sax. A line; a streak. *A strike of flax.* 678.

Stripe, *n.* Lat. *Stirps.* Race; kindred. C. L. 16.

——— *v.* 10074. as **Strepe**.

Strode, *pr. n.* T. v. 1856. The *philosophical Strode*, to whom, jointly with the *moral Gower*, Chaucer directs his Troilus, was probably *Ralph Strode*, of Merton College, Oxford. A. Wood, who had made the antiquities of that college a particular object of his enquiries, says only of him, "Radulphus Strode, de quo sic vetus noster catalogus. *Poeta fuit et versificavit librum elegiacum vocat. Phantasma Rodulphi.* Claruit cicccclxx." Some of his logical works are said to be extant in print. Venet. 1517. 4to. Tanner, in v. Strodæus.

Strof, *pa. t.* of **Strive**, *v.* Fr. Strove; contended. 1040.

Stronde, *n.* Sax. A shore. 13.

Struther, *pr. n.* A town in the North. 4012. See the note.

Stroute, *v.* To strut. 3315.

Suburbes, *n. pl.* Lat. Suburbs. 16125.

Subfumigation, *n.* Lat. A species of charm by smoke. P. iii. 174.

Subget, *adj.* Fr. Lat. Subject. P. 171, col. 1, l. 64.

Sublimatorie, *n.* Fr. Lat. A vessel used by Chemists in *Sublimation*, i. e. separating certain parts of a body, and driving them to the top of the vessel, in the form of a very fine powder. 16261.

Substance, *n.* Fr. The material part of a thing. 14809.

Suckiny, *n.* Fr. *Souquenie.* A loose frock, worn over their other clothes by carters, &c. R. 1232.

Sue, *v.* Fr. To follow. M. 114, col. 2, l. 2.

Sueton, *pr. n.* Suetonius, the Roman historian. 14638.

Suffisance, *n.* Fr. Sufficiency; satisfaction. 492. 8635.

Suffisant, *adj.* Sufficient. 1633. 3551.

Sugred, *part. pa.* Sweetened as with sugar. T. ii. 384.

Supplie, *v.* Fr. To supplicate. Bo. iii. pr. 8.

Surcote, *n.* Fr. An upper coat, or kirtle. F. L. 141.

Surplis, *n.* Fr. A surplice. 16026.

Surquedrie, *n.* Fr. Presumption; an overweening conceit, P. 155, col. 1, l. 50. 172, col. 2, l. 4.

Surrie, *pr. n.* Syria. 4554.

Sursanure, *n.* Fr. A wound healed outwardly only. 11425.

Surveance, *n.* Fr. Superintendance. 12029.

Suspect, *adj* Fr. Suspected. 8417, 8.

——— *n.* Suspicion. 8781. 12197.

Suspection, *n.* Suspicion. 5101.

Suster, *n.* Sax. Sister. **Sustren**, *pl.* 1021. T. iii. 734.

Swa, *adv.* Sax. So. 4028 4038.

Swale, *pa. t.* of **Swell**, *v.* Sax. Swelled. 6549. 13490.

Swappe, *v.* Sax. To throw down. T. iv. 244.—To strike off. 8462. 15834.—*v. neut.* To fall down. 8975.

Swart, *adj.* Sax. Black; of a dark colour. C. D. 1862.

Swatte, *pa. t.* of **Swete**, *v.* Sax. Sweated. 13706. 16028.

Sweoh, *n.* Sax. A violent motion. 4716. Bo. i. m. 5.

Swelte, *v.* Sax. To die; to faint. 3703.

Swelt, *pa. t.* 1358. 9650.

Swerne for **Sweren**, *pl. n.* of **Swere**, *v.* Sax. Swear. R. 4834.

Sweven, *n.* Sax. A dream. 14902. 14928. **Swevenes**, *pl.* 14929. In ver. 14927. it is written *Swevenis* for the sake of the rime.

Swiche, *adj.* Sax. corruption of *Swilke.* Such. 243. 487.

Swinke, *n.* Sax. Labour. 188.

——— *v.* To labour. 187. 12808.

Swire, *n.* Sax. The neck. R. 325. It is more commonly written *Swere.*

Swithe, *adv.* Sax. Quickly; immediately. 5150. 12730.

Swive, *v.* Sax. See *Junii Etymolog.* in v.

Swolowe, *n.* Sax. A whirlpool. L. W. 1102.

Swonken, *part. pa.* of **Swinke**. 4233.

Swough, *n.* Sax. Sound; noise. 1981. 3619—A swoon 6381. 8976.

T.

Tabard, *n.* 20. See the quotation from Speght's Gloss. Discourse, &c. n. 6.

Tables, *n. pl.* Fr. A game so called. 11212.—*Tables Toletanes.* 11585. See the note.

Tabourie, *v.* Fr. To drum. L. W. 354.

Tache, *n.* Fr. A spot, or blemish. C. N. 192.

Taillager, *n.* Fr. A collector of taxes. R. 6811.

Taille, *n.* Fr. A tally; an account scored on a piece of wood. 572.

Take, *v.* Sax. To deliver a thing to another person. 5137. 13334. 15691.

——— for **Taken**, *part. pa.* 1868. 10789.

Takel, *n.* Sax. An arrow. 106. R. 1727.

Tale, *v.* Sax. To tell stories. C. D. 103. *And namely when they* **talen** *longe. Conf. Am.* 27. b.

——— *n.* Speech; discourse. Bo. i. pr. 5.—Reckoning; account. *Litel tale hath he told of any dreme.* 15124. He made little account of any dream.

Talent, *n.* Fr. Desire; affection. 5557. P. 151, col. 1, l. 25.

Taling, *n.* Story-telling. 13364.

Tane for **Taken**. C. D. 888.

Tapes, *n. pl.* Sax. Bands of linen. 3241.

Tapinage, *n.* Fr. *En tapinois.* Lurking; sculking about. R. 7363. *Conf. Am.* 93 b.

Tapiser, *n.* Fr. A maker of tapestry. 364.

Tapite, *v.* Fr. To cover with tapestry. Du. 260.

Tappe, *n.* Sax. A tap, or spigot, which closes that orifice through which the liquor is drawn out of a vessel. 3898.

Tapstere, *n.* Sax. *A woman*, who has the care of a tap in a publick-house. 241. 3356. See the n. on ver. 2019. That office, formerly, was usually executed by women. See the *Adventure of the Pardonere and the Tapstere*, in the *Continuation of the Canterbury Tales.* p. 594 Ed. Ur.

Tare, *pa. t.* of **Teare**, *v.* Sax. Tore. Magd. 150.

Targe, *n.* Fr. A sort of shield. 473. 2124.

Tars, *n. Cloth of Tars.* 2162. *Tartarium.* F. L. 212. A sort of silk. See Du Cange, in v. Tarsicus, Tartarinus.

Tas, *n.* Fr. A heap. 1007. 1011.

Tasseled, *part. pa.* Adorned with tassels. 3251.

Taste, *v.* Fr. To feel. 15971.—To examine. L. W. 1991.

Tatarwagges, *n. pl.* R. 7211. The Orig. is—*Toutes freteiées de* **crotes**. All bedagled with *dirt.*

Taverner, *n.* Fr. The keeper of a tavern. 12619. 12641.

Taure, *pr. n.* The constellation Taurus. 6195. 9761.

Tawe, *n.* Sax. Tow. 3772.

Teche, *v.* Sax. To teach. 310.

Teine, *n.* 16693, 7. 16708. seems to signifie a narrow, thin, plate of metal; perhaps from the Lat. Gr. *Tænia.*

Temps, *n.* Fr. Time. 16343.

Tene, *n.* Sax. Grief. 3108. *Conf. Am.* 140.

——— *v.* To grieve; to afflict. T. i. ii. 338 b.

Tercelet, **Tercell**, *n.* Fr. The male hawk. 10618.—The male eagle. A. F. 393.

Terins, *n. pl.* R. 665. A sort of small bird, called in F *Tarin.* See Cotgrave in v.

Termagaunt, *pr. n.* 13741. See the note

Terrestre, *n.* Fr. Earthly. 9206.

Tery, *adj.* Sax. Full of tears. T. iv. 821.

Testeres, *n. pl.* Fr. Head-pieces. 2501.

Testes, *n. pl.* Lat. Vessels for assaying metals. 16268.

TESTIF, *adj.* FR. Head-strong. 4002.

TETCH, *n.* as TACHE. R. 6517.

TEWELL, *n.* FR. A pipe, or funnel. F. iii. 559.

TEXTUEL, *adj.* FR. Ready at citing texts. 17184. 17265.

THACKE, *n.* SAX. Thatch. C. D. 1771.

——— *v.* To thump; to thwack. 7141.

THAN, *adv.* SAX. *Quàm.* LAT. 219. 242.

THANK, *n.* SAX. Thankfulness; good will. R. 2741. IN THANKE—*is taken more.*—

> EN *plus grant* GRE, *soul receus.* Orig.

So the phrases, *his thankes, hir thankes,* (see the n. on ver. 1628.) answer to the French, *son gré, leur gré.*

THANNE, THAN, *adv.* SAX. Then. 12260. 12284.

THAR, *v.* SAX. *impers.* Behoveth. See the n. on ver. 4318.

THATTE, THAT, *pron. dem.* SAX. used as a *relative.* 10. 699. *Thatte Seint Peter had.* So this verse should be written. —*That he mighte.* 5456. As much as he was able; *Quod potuit.*—It is sometimes put, not inelegantly, for *the same.* See ver. 194. *With gris,* AND THAT *the finest of the lond.* ver. 346. *Of fish and flesh,* AND THAT *so plenteous.* ver. 3517. *Shal fall a rain,* AND THAT *so wild and wood.* See also ver. 563. 3938. 9280.

THATTE, THAT, *conj.* SAX. *Quòd.* LAT. 131. 226, 8.

THE, *prep. art.* SAX. See the Essay, &c. p. XXIV. *The* when prefixed to *adjectives,* or *adverbs,* in the *comparative degree,* is generally to be considered as a corruption of þÿ, which was commonly put by the Saxons for þam, the *ablative ca. sing.* of the *art.* þæt, used as a *pronoun.* THE *merier.* 716. *Eo lætiùs.* THE *more mery.* 804. *Eo læliores.* Of the same construction are the phrases—*Yet fare they* THE *werse.* 4348. *Yet fare I never* THE *bet.* 7533.

When *the* is repeated with a second comparative, either *adj.* or *adv.* the first *the* is to be understood in the sense of the LAT. *Quo.* See ver. 5955.

> *The more* it brenneth, *the more* it hath desire
> To consume every thing.——
>
> ——*Quo magis—eo magis*——And ver. 8589.
>
> And ay *the further* that she was in age,
> *The more trewe* (if that it were possible)
> She was to him in love and more penible.

Sometimes the first *the* is omitted, as in the phrases, *Ever lenger the werse.* 3870. *Ever lenger the more.* 8563. See P. 170, col. 1, l. 30. For certes, if a man hadde a dedly wound, *ever the lenger* that he taried to warishe himself, *the more* wold it corrupt—and also the wound wold be *the werse* for to hele.

——— *v.* SAX. To thrive. See the n. on ver. 3862.

THEDOME, *n.* SAX. Thrift; success. 13335.

THEFELY, *adj.* SAX. Like a thief. L. W. 1779.

THENNES, THENNE, *adv.* SAX. Thence. 5463. 6723.

THENNESFORTH, *adv.* SAX. *From thenneforth.* 13495. From that time forward.

THEODOMAS, *pr. n.* 9594. See the note.

THEOPHRAST, *pr. n.* 9170. See the Discourse, &c. n. 19. and the n. on ver. 9172.

THER, *adv.* SAX. There, in that place; is frequently used in the sense of *Where.* 7348. 7378. 12059.

THER, in composition, signifies *that,* without including any idea of place. See HERE. *Therabouten.* 939. *Theragain,* 7070. *Therbeforne.* 2036. *Therby.* 7786. *Therfore.* 777. *Therfro.* R. 4941. *Thergaine.* R. 6555. *Therof.* 3781. *Theron.* 161. *Therto.* 153. *Therwith.* 3780. *Therwithall.* 568.

THEWES *n. pl.* SAX. Manners; qualities. 8285 9416.

THIDER, *adv.* SAX. Thither, to that place. 1265.

THIDERWARD, *adv.* SAX. Toward that place. 2532.

THILKE, *adj.* SAX. This same, that same. 5600. 5759.

THINKE, *v.* SAX. To consider. 12261. It is very frequently used as an *Impersonal* in the *pr.* and *pa. t.* in the sense of SEEMETH, or SEEMED. *Me thinketh.* 3170. *Him thinketh.* 3614. *Him thoughte.* 956. *Hire thoughte.* 9838. *How thinketh you?* 7786. *Hem thoughte.* 8282.

THINNE, *adj.* SAX. Slender; small. 9556. *A thinne imagination.* Bo. iii. pr. 3. *Tenui imagine. A thinne suspicion.* Bo. iii. pr. 12. *Tenui suspicione.*

THIRLE, *v.* SAX. To pierce through. 2712.

THIS, *pron. demonst.* SAX. is sometimes put for the prepositive article. 12619. THISE, *pl.* 6142. 11508.

THO, *prep. art. pl.* DA. SAX. used as a demonstrative pronoun. Those. 2315. 2353. 12482. M. 114, col. 2, l. 42.

THO, *adv.* SAX. Then. 2214. 2393.

THOLE, *v.* SAX. To suffer. 7128. *And what mischefe and male ease Christ for man* THOLED. P. P. 65 b.

THORE. R. 1853. is put for THERE, for the sake of the rime.

THORPE, *n.* SAX. A village. 8075. 17323.

THOUGHTEN, *pa. t. pl.* of THINKE, *v.* SAX. 7612.

THRALL, *n.* SAX. A slave, or villain. P. 169, col. 1, l. 42.

THRALLE, *v.* To enslave. T. ii. 773.

THRASTE, *pa. t.* of THRESTE. 12194.

THRED-BARE, *adj.* SAX. Having the threads bare, the nap being worn away. 16358.

THREMOTE. Du. 376. should be written, in two words, *thre mote,* as in the *Bodl.* MSS. MOT. *n.* FR. is explained by Cotgrave to signifie, among other things, *the note winded by a huntsman on his horne.*

THREPE, *v.* SAX. To call. 16294.

THRESTE, *v.* SAX. To thrust. 2614. 9677.

THRESWOLD, *n.* SAX. A threshold. 3482. 8164.

THREYE, *v.* SAX. To threaten. L. W. 754.

THRETTENE, *num.* SAX. Thirteen. 7841.

THRIDDE, *adj.* SAX. Third. 1465. 2273.

THRIE, THRIES, *adv.* SAX. Thrice. 63. 564. T. ii. 89. 1285.

THRILLED for THIRLED, *pa. t.* of THIRLE. R. 7636.

THRINGE, *v.* SAX. To thrust. R. 7419. T. iv. 66.

THRISTE, *pa. t.* of THRESTE. T. iii. 1580.

THRONGE, *pa. t.* of THRINGE. 10227.

THROPES for THORPES. A. F. 350.

THROSTEL, *n.* SAX. A thrush. 13699.

THROW, *n.* SAX. Time. *But a throw.* 5373. But a little while. *Any throw.* 14142. Any space of time. *Many a throw.* 16409. Many times.

THRUST for THURST, *n.* SAX. Thirst. R. 5713.

THRUSTY for THURSTY, *adj.* SAX. Thirsty. Magd. 708.

THURGH, *prep.* SAX. Through. 2614, 9.—By means of 1330, 1.

THURGHFARE, *n.* SAX. A passage. 2849.

THURGHOUT, *prep.* SAX. Throughout; quite through. 1098 2569.

THURROK, *n.* SAX. The hold of a ship. P. 154, col. 1, l. 54 See the note.

THWITEL, *n.* SAX. A whittle; *Cultellus.* 3931.

THWITTEN, *part. pa.* Chipped with a knife; whittled. R. 933. *Bien dolé.* Orig.

TIDDE, *part. pa.* of TIDE, *v.* SAX. Happened. *Thee shulde never have tidde so faire a grace.* T. i. 908. So fair a fortune should never have happened to thee.

TIDIFE, *n.* 10962. See the note.

TIKEL, *adj.* SAX. Uncertain. 3428.

TIL, *prep.* SAX. To. 2067. 2966. *Hire-till.* 10812. To her.

TIMBESTERE, *n.* R. 769. is supposed by Lye, (*Etym. Ling. Angl.* in v.) to mean the same with *Tombestere.* The Orig. French has been quoted above in v. SAILOURS, which Chaucer has thus imitated.

> *There was many a* timbestere
> *And sailours, that, I dare well swere,*
> *Ycouthe hir craft full parfitly.*
> *The* timbres *up full subtilly*
> *Thei casten, and hent hem full oft*
> *Upon a finger faire and soft,*
> *That thei ne failed never mo.*

According to this description, it should rather seem, that a *Timbestere* was a woman, (see the n. on ver. 2019.) who plaid tricks with *timbres,* basons of some sort or other, by throwing them up into the air, and catching them upon a single finger; a kind of Balance-mistress.

TIMBRES, *n. pl.* FR. R. 772. Basons. See TIMBESTERE.

TIPET, *n.* SAX. A tippet. 3951.

TIPPED, *part. pa.* Headed; covered at the tip, or top. 7319. 7322.

TIPTOON, *n. pl.* SAX. Tiptoes; the extremities of the toes. 15313.

TIRE, *v.* FR. To pluck; to feed upon, in the manner of

birds of prey. T. i. 788. *For loke how that a goshauke* TYRETH. *Conf. Am.* 139. b.

TISSUE, *n.* FR. A ribband. T. ii. 639.

TITE for TIDETH. T. i. 334. Happeneth.

TITERING, *n.* SAX. Courtship. T. ii. 1744.

TITLELES, *adj.* SAX. Without title. 17172.

TITUS LIVIUS, *pr. n.* 11935. L. W. 1681. The Roman historian.

TO, *adv.* SAX. Too. 877. 996.

— *prep.* SAX. *To day.* 7758. 7821. On this day. *To morwe.* 782. 1612. On the morrow, *the following day. To yere.* 5750. T. iii. 242. F. i. 84. In *this* year.

To, in composition with verbs, is generally augmentative. 2611. *The helmes they* TO-HEWEN *and* TO-SHREDE, i. e. hewe and cut to pieces. 2613. *The bones they* TO-BRESTE, i. e. break in pieces. TO-BROSTEN. 2693. TO-DASHED. T. ii. 640. Much bruised. TO-RENT. 12036. Rent in pieces. TO-SWINKE. 12453. Labour greatly.—Sometimes the *adv.* ALL is added. AL-TO-RENT. 14267. ALL-TO-SHARE. R. 1858. Entirely cut to pieces. ALL-TO-SHENT. *Ibid.* 1903. Entirely ruined.

TOFORE, TOFOREN, *prep.* SAX. Before. M. 113, col. 1, l. 55.

TOGITHERS, *adv.* SAX. Together. T. iv. 1322.

TOLD, *pa. t.* of TELL, *v.* SAX. Accounted. 14404.

TOMPESTERE, *n.* SAX. A dancing-woman T. L. ii. 326. b.

TOMESTERES, *pl.* 12411. See the note.

TOMEDES, T. ii. 1201. should be written as two words. *To mede*, or *to medes*, according to the Saxon usage, signifies *for reward, in return.*

TONE, *n. pl.* SAX. Toes. 14868. F. iii. 938.

TONNE-GRET, *adj.* Of the circumference of a tun. 1996.

TOOS, *n. pl.* 13337. as TONE.

TORETES, *n. pl.* FR. Rings. See the note on ver. 2154.

TORNE, *v.* FR. To turn. 2320. *The devil out of his skinne Him torne!* 16742. May the devil turn him, inside out!

TORNED, *part. pa.* 16639.

TORTUOUS, *adj.* FR. Oblique; winding. 4722.

TOTELER. *n.* A whisperer. L. W. 353.

TOTELAR. *Susurro.* Prompt. Parv.

TOTTY, *adj.* SAX. Dizzy. 4251.

TOUGH, *adj.* SAX. Difficult. *And maketh it full tough.* 13309. And takes a great deal of pains. *Or make it tough.* T. v. 101. Or take pains about it. See also T. ii. 1025. iii. 87. *And make it neither tough ne queint.* Du. 531. Made no difficulty or strangeness.

> *Al be it ye make it never sa tweche,*
> *To me your labour is in vane.*
> MS. Maitland. *The mourning maiden.*
> *Will. Swane makis wonder tewche.*
> Ibid. *Peblis to the play.* St. 21.

TOUGHT, *adj.* SAX. Tight. 7849.

TOUR, *n.* FR. A tower. 1032.

TOURNET, *n.* R. 4164. should be written *Tourette*, as in MS. Hunter. A turret, or small tower.

TOUT, *n.* The backside. 3810. 3851.

TOWAIL, *n.* FR. A towel. 14663. 14671.

TOWARDES, *prep.* SAX. Toward. 12640.

TOWEL, *n.* 7730. is perhaps put for TEWEL; a pipe fundament.

TRACE, *n.* FR. A track, or path. 176.—A train. L.

TRADE, *pa. t* of TREAD, *v.* SAX. Trod. 15184.

TRAGETOUR, *n.* F. iii. 187. as TREGETOUR.

TRAIE, *v.* FR. To betray. F. i. 390.

TRAIS, *n. pl.* FR. *Traits.* The traces, by which horses draw. 2141. T. i. 222.

TRAMISENE, *pr. n.* A kingdom in Africa. See the n. on ver. 57.

TRANSMEWE, *v.* FR. To transform. 8261. T. iv. 467.

TRAPPURES, *n. pl.* BARB. LAT. The cloths, with which horses were covered for parade. 2501. See Du Cange, in v. TRAPPATURA.

TRASHED, *part. pa.* Betrayed. R. 3231.

TRATE, *n.* 7164. See the note. Bp. Douglas frequently uses *Trat* for an *old woman.* Æn. VII. 416. *in vultus sese transformat aniles*—he renders,

> *And hir in schape transformyt of ane trat.*

See also, p. 96, 28. *auld trat*—and p. 122, 39.

TRAVE, *n.* FR. *Travail.* A frame, in which farriers put unruly horses. 3282.

TRE, *n.* SAX. A tree; wood. 5682. *Cristes tre.* 3765. The Cross.

TRECHOUR, *n.* FR. A cheat. R. 6308. 7168.

TREDE-FOULE, *n.* A treader of hens; a cock. 13951. 15457.

TREGETOUR, *n.* See the n. on ver. 11453.

TRENCHANT, *part. pr.* FR. Cutting. 3928.

TRENTAL, *n.* See the n. on ver. 7299.

TREPEGET, *n.* FR. A military engine. R. 6279. See Du Cange, in v. TREBUCHETUM.

TRESSE, *n.* FR. An artificial lock, or gathering of hair. 1051. See Du Cange, in *v.* TRICA, TRECIA.

TRESSED, *part. pa.* Gathered in a tress, or tresses. 5926.

TRESSOUR, *n.* An instrument used in tressing the hair; or an ornament of it, when tressed. R. 568. 3717. See Du Cange, in v. TRESSORIUM.

TRETABLE, *adj.* FR. Tractable. P. 161, col. 1, l. 67. L. W. 411.

TRETE, *v.* FR. To treat; to discourse. 10534.

TRETEE, *n.* Treaty. 9566.

TRETIS, *n.* Treaty. T. iv. 64. 670.

——— *adj.* FR. Long and well proportioned. 152. R. 1016. 1216.

TREWE, *n.* FR. A truce. T. iv. 1312.

——— *adj.* SAX. True, faithful. 2237. 3706.

TREWE-LOVE, *n.* 3692. See the note. Since which Mr. Steevens has very obligingly suggested to me, that there is a herb called *True-love*, according to Gerard, in his Herbal. Ed. 1597. p. 328. "HERBA PARIS. One-berrie, or herbe *True-love*—at the very top whereof come forth fower leaves, directly set one against another, in manner of a Burgunnion cross, or a true love knot; for which cause among the auncients it hath been called herbe *True-love.*" This herb, however, to the best of my remembrance, is rather too large to be carried conveniently *under the tongue.*—A *trewelove*, of the same or an other sort, is mentioned in the concluding stanza of the *Court of Love.*

> Eke eche at other threw the floures bright,
> The primerose, the violete, and the gold;
> So than as I beheld the royal sight,
> My lady gan me sodenly behold,
> And with a *trewelove, plited many a fold*,
> She smote me through the very heart as blive,
> And Venus yet I thanke I am alive.

TRIACLE, *n.* FR. corruption of *Theriaque.* A remedy, in general. 4899. 12248.

TRICE, *v.* SAX To thrust. 14443.

TRIE, *adj.* 13785. *f.* Tried or refined. Gloss. *Ur.*

TRILL, *v.* SAX. To twirl; to turn round. 10630.

——— *v. neut.* To roll; to trickle. 7446. 13604.

TRINE, *adj.* FR. Triple. *Trine compas.* 15513. The Trinity. See COMPAS.

TRIPPE, *n.* 7329. evidently means *a small piece* of cheese. *Les tripes d'un fagot*, in FR. are *The smallest sticks in a faggot.* Cotgrave.

TRISTE, *v.* for TRUSTE. T. ii. 247.

TRISTE, *n.* T. ii. 1534. A post or station in hunting. *Cowell.* This seems to be the true meaning of the word, though the etymology is not so clear.

TROMPE, *n.* FR. A trumpet. 2176. 2513.

TROMPOUR, *n.* A trumpeter. 2673.

TRONCHOUN, *n.* FR. A spear, without a head. 2617.

TRONE, *n.* FR. A throne. 2531. 12776.

TROPHEE, *pr. n.* 14123 See the note. It afterwards occurred to me that the reference might possibly be to the original of the *Troilus and Cresside*, which, according to Lydgate, was called *Trophe*; (see the n. on P. 172, col. 2, l. 23, in page 209 of this edit.) but I cannot find any such passage as is here quoted, in the *Filostrato.*

TROTULA, *pr. n.* 6250. See the n. on ver. 6253.

TROUBLE, *adj.* FR. Dark, gloomy. 8341.

TROUBLER, *comp. d.* R 7020.

TROWANDISE. R. 3954. for TRUANDISE.

TROWE, *v.* SAX. To believe. 7139. 7567.

TRUANDISE, *n.* FR. Begging. R. 6684.

TRUANDING. R. 6721.

TULLE, *v.* SAX. To allure. 4132. See ver. 5497

TULLIUS, *pr. n.* M. 110, col. 1, l. 64. M. Tullius Cicero. See also R. 5286. A. F. 31.

TURKEIS, *n.* FR. A sort of precious stone. C. L. 80.

——— *adj.* FR. Turkish. 2897. See the note.

TURMENTISE, *n.* FR. Torment. 14435.

TURVES, *pl.* of TURF, *n.* SAX. 10109.

TWAINE. T. iii. 551. TWAY. 794. TWEY. 1696. TWEINE. 8526. *numer.* SAX. Two.

TWEIFOLD, *adj.* SAX. Double. 16034.

TWIES, *adv.* SAX. Twice. 4346.

TWIGHT, *pa. t.* and *part.* of TWITCH, *v.* SAX. Pulled; Plucked. 7145. 10732.

TWINNE, *v.* SAX. To depart from a place, or thing. 837. 12364.

TWINNED, *part. pa.* Separated. T. iv. 476.

TWIRE, *v.* Bo. iii. m. 2. *Twireth* seems to be the translation of *susurrat;* spoken of a bird.

TWIST, *n.* SAX. A twig. 10223.

TWISTE, *v.* SAX. To twitch; to pull hard. 10880.

TWISTE, *pa. t.* Twitched. 9879.

V.

VALENCE, *pr. n.* A. F. 272. Valencia in Spain. Gloss. *Ur.*

VALERIE, *pr. n.* 6253. See the Discourse, &c. n. 19.

VALERIE. 14638. VALERIUS. 6747. *pr. n.* Valerius Maximus.

VALURE, *n.* FR. Value. R. 5236.

VARIEN, *inf. m. v.* FR. To change; to alter. T. ii. 1621.

VARIAUNT, *part. pr.* 16643. Changeable.

VASSALAGE, *n.* FR. Valour; courage. 3056. R. 5871.

VAVASOUR, *n.* 362. See the note.

VAUNTOUR, *n.* FR. A boaster. T. ii. 724.

VECKE, *n.* ITAL. An old woman. R. 4286. 4495.

VEINE-BLODE, *n.* Blood drawn from a vein. 2749.

VENDABLE, *adj.* FR. To be sold. R. 5804.

VENERIE, *n.* FR. Hunting. 166. 2310.

VENGE, *v.* FR. To revenge. M. 112, col. 1, l. 58.

VENIME, *n.* FR. Poison; venom. 2753.

VENTOUSING, *n.* FR. Cupping. 2749.

VER, *n.* LAT. The Spring. T. i. 157.

VERAMENT, *adv.* FR. Truly. 13643.

VERAY, *adj.* FR. True. 6786.

VERDEGRKEE, *n.* FR. *Verd du gris.* The rust of brass; so called from its colour, a grey green. 16258.

VERDITE, *n.* FR. Judgement; sentence. 789. A. F. 503.

VERGER, *n.* FR. A garden. R. 3618. 3831.

VERMEILE, *adj.* FR. Of a vermilion colour. R. 3645.

VERMELET, *adj.* C. L. 142. as VERMEILE.

VERNAGE. 9681. See the note.

VERNICLE, *n.* 687. diminutive of *Veronike.* FR. A copy in miniature of the picture of Christ, which is supposed to have been miraculously imprinted upon a handkerchief, preserved in the church of St. Peter at Rome. Du Cange, in v. VERONICA. Madox, *Form. Angl.* p. 428. Testam. Joh. de Nevill. an. 1386. *Item Domino Archiepiscopo Eborum fratri meo* i. *vestimentum rubeum de velvet cum le* verouike (r. *veronike*) *in granis rosarum desuper* brondata (r. *broudata*). It was usual for persons returning from pilgrimages to bring with them certain tokens of the several places which they had visited; and therefore the Pardoner, who is just arrived from Rome, is represented with *a vernicle, sewed upon his cappe.* See P. P. 28. b.

An hundred amples on hys hatte sette,
Sygnes of Sinay and shelles of * *Calice,*
And many a crouch on his cloke and kayes of Rome,
And THE VERNICLE *before, for men should knowe*
And se by hys signes, whom he sought hadde.

VERNISH, *v.* FR. To varnish. 4147.

VERRE, *n.* FR. Glass. T. ii. 867.

VERSIFIOUR, *n.* FR. A maker of verses; a poet. M. 116, col. 2, l. 45.

VERTULES, *adj.* Without efficacy. T. ii. 344.

VERTUOUS, *adj.* FR. Active; efficacious. 251.

VESSELL, *n.* FR. *Vaisselle.* Plate. 14154. 14310.

UGLY, *adj.* SAX. Horrid; frightful. 8549.

VIAGE, *n.* FR. A journey by sea or land. 77. 794.

VICARY, *n.* LAT. A vicar. 17333.

* MS. *Gales.* Perhaps it should be *Galice.* See ver. 468.

VICE, *n.* FR. The newel, or upright centre of a winding stair-case. C. D. 1310.

VIGILE, *n.* FR. The eve of a festival. 379.—The wake, or watching of a dead body. T. v. 305. See the n. on ver. 2260.

VIGILIE, *n.* LAT. as VIGILE. 6138.

VILANIE, *n.* FR. Any thing unbecoming a gentleman. 70 6733.

VINOLENT, *adj.* LAT. Full of wine. 6049. 7513.

VIRELAYE, *n.* FR. 11260. "A round, freeman's song." Cotgrave. There is a particular description of a *Virlai,* in the *Jardin de plaisance.* fol. xii. where it makes the *decima sexta species Rhetorice Gallicane.*

VIRGILE, *pr. n.* 7101. L. W. 924. F. i. 449.

VISAGE, *v.* FR. To front; to face a thing. 10147.

VISE, *n.* 1967. In MS. A. *vese.* Perhaps we should read *rese,* a Saxon word signifying *violence, impetuosity.* See T. iv. 350. where (according to Gloss. *Ur.*) instead of *rage* some MSS. have *rees;* and the *Prol. to the Contin. of the Cant. T.* ver. 498. 548. If this correction be admitted, we must also read in the next line *rese* for *rise,* with MS. A.

VITAILLE, *n.* FR. Victuals. 3551. 7935.

VITELLON, *pr. n.* 10546. See the note.

UNBETIDE, *v.* SAX. To fail to happen. Bo. v. pr. 6.

UNBODIE, *v.* SAX. To leave the body. T. v. 1549.

UNBOKEL, *v.* FR. To unbuckle; to open. 17337.

UNCE, *n.* FR. LAT. Ounce. 16722. 16734.

UNCOMMITTED, *part. pa.* A. F. 518. *Office uncommitted of anoyeth.* Compare ver. 16534, 5.

UNCONNING, *part. pr.* Ignorant. 2395.

——— *n.* Ignorance. B. K. 608.

UNCOVENABLE, *adj.* Inconvenient. Bo. iv. pr. 6.

UNCOUPLE, *v.* To go loose; *Metaphor* from hounds. 14420.

UNCOUPLINGE, *n.* Letting loose. Du. 377.

UNCOUTH, *part. pa.* Unknown. See COUTH.—Uncommon; not vulgar; elegant. 10598. T. iii. 1803. F. L. 276. C. D. 93.

UNCOUTHLY, *adv.* Uncommonly. R. 584.

UNDEPARTABLE, *adj.* Not capable of departing. R. iv. pr. 3.

UNDERFONG, *v.* SAX. To undertake. R. 5709.

UNDERGROWE, *part. pa.* Undergrown; of a low stature. 156.

UNDERLING, *n.* SAX. An inferior. P. 164, col. 1, l. 13.

UNDERMELE, *n.* SAX. 6457. See the note. Upon further consideration, I am rather inclined to believe, that *undermele* signifies *the time after the meal of dinner;* the afternoon. UNDERMELE. *Postmeridies.* Prompt. Parv.

UNDERN, *n.* SAX. The third hour of the artificial day; nine of the clock. A. M. 15228. See the n. on ver. 8136. *Till it was* UNDERNE *hygh, and more.* Conf. Am. 103. b.

UNDERNOME, *pa. t.* of UNDERNIME, *v.* SAX. Took up; received. 15711.

UNDERPIGHT, *pa. t.* See PIGHT. *He dranke, and wel his girdel underpight.* 5209. He drank, and stuffed his girdle well.

UNDERSPORE, *v.* SAX. To raise a thing, by putting a *spere,* or pole, under it. 3465

UNDERSTONDE, *part. pa.* Understood. 4940. 9559.

UNDO, *v.* SAX. To unfold. R. 9.

UNDOUBTOUS, *adj.* Undoubted. B. v. pr. 1. *Indubitata* Orig. See DOUTOUS.

UNESCHUABLE, *adj.* SAX. Unavoidable. Bo. v. pr. 1. *Inevitabili.* Orig.

UNESE, *n.* Uneasiness. C. D. 867.

UN-ETH, UN-ETHES, *adv.* SAX. Scarcely; not easily. 3123. 7685.

UNFAMOUS, *adj.* Unknown. F. iii. 56.

UNFESTLICHE, *adj.* Not suitable to a feast. 10680.

UNGODELY, *adj.* Uncivil; ungenteel. R. 3741. *That I n' olde holde hire* UNGODELY. Orig. *Que je ne tenisse à vilaine.*

UNGREARLE, *adj.* Unpleasant; disagreeable. Bo. i. m. 1. *Ingratas.* Orig.

UNHELE, *n.* SAX. Misfortune. 12050.

UNHIDE, *v.* To discover. R. 2168.

UNJOINE, *v.* To separate; to disjoin. Bo. iii. pr. 12.

UNKINDELY, *adv.* Unnaturally. 12419.

UNKNOWABLE, *adj.* Incapable of being known. Bo. ii. m. 7 *Ignorabiles.* Orig.

UNLETTED, *part. pa.* Undisturbed. C. D. 1829.

UNLOVEN, *v.* To cease loving. T. v. 1697.

UNLUST, *n.* Dislike. P. 162, col. 1, l. 9.

UNMANHODE, *n.* Cowardice. T. i. 825.
UNMIGHTY, *adj.* Unable. T. ii. 858.
UNPEREGAL, *adj.* Unequal. Bo. iii. pr. 1. *Impar.* Orig.
UNPIN, *v.* SAX. To unlock. T. iii. 699.
UNPITOUS, *adj.* Cruel. Bo. i. m. 1. *Impia.*
UNPLITE, *v.* To unfold. Bo. ii. pr. 8.
UNREST, *n.* Want of rest. 6686.—Uneasiness; trouble. 8595.
UNRESTY, *adj* Unquiet. T. v. 1354.
UNRIGHT, *n.* Wrong. 6675.
UNSAD, *adj.* Unsteady. 8671.
UNSCIENCE, *n.* Not-science. Bo. v. pr. 3.
UNSELY, *adj.* Unhappy. 4208. 15936.
UNSET, *part. pa.* Not appointed. 1526.
UNSHETTE, *pa. t.* Opened. 9921.
UNSKILFULLY, *adv.* SAX. Without reason. Bo. iii. pr. 6. *Injurid.* Orig.
UNSLEKKED, *part. pa.* Unslacked. 16274.
UNSLEPT *part pa.* Having had no sleep. C. D. 1834.
UNSOFT, *adj.* Hard. 9698.
UNSOLEMPNE, *adj.* Uncelebrated. Bo. i. pr. 3. *Incelebris.* Orig.
UNSPERDE, *part. pa.* Unbolted. R. 9654.
UNSTANCHEABLE, *adj.* Inexhaustible. Bo. ii. pr. 7. *Inexhausta.* Orig.
UNSTANCHED, *part. pa.* Unsatisfied. Bo. ii. pr. 6. *Inexpletam.* Orig.
UNSUFFICIENT. *adj* Insufficient. 10351.
UNSWELL, *v.* To fall after swelling. T. iv. 1146.
UNTHANK, *n.* No thanks; ill-will. 4080. T. v. 699.
UNTIL, *prep.* SAX. To; unto. 214.
UNTIME, *n.* An unseasonable time. P. 171, col. 2, l. 20.
UNTO, *adv.* SAX. Until. A. F. 647.
UNTRESSED, *part. pa.* Not tied in a tress, or tresses. 2291. 8255.
UNTRETABLE, *adj.* Not admitting any treaty. Bo. ii. pr. 8. *Bellum inexorabile.* Orig. Πολέμος ἀπαραίτητος.
UNTRISTE for UNTRUSTE, *v.* To mistrust. T. iii. 841.
UNTRUST, *n.* Distrust. 10080.
UNUSAGE, *n.* Want of usage. Bo. ii. pr. 7. *Insolentia.* Orig.
UNWARE, *part. pa.* Unforeseen. 4847. 11668.
UNWELD, *adj.* Unwieldy. 3884. R. 359.
UNWEMMED, *part. pa.* Unspotted. 5344. 15605.
UNWETING, *part. pr.* Not knowing. *Unweting of this Dorigen.* 11248. Dorigen not knowing of this.
UNWETINGLY, *adv.* Ignorantly. 12420.
UNWIST, *part pa.* Unknown. T. ii. 1294. *Unwist of him.* 2979. It being unknown to him.—Not knowing. T. ii. 1400.
UNWIT, *n.* Want of wit. 16553.
UNWOTE, *v.* SAX. To be ignorant. Bo. v. pr. 6.
UNWRIE, *v.* To uncover. T. i. 859.
UNYOLDEN, *part. pa.* Not having yielded. 2644. 2726.
VOIDE, *v.* FR. To remove. 8786. 10502.—To quit; to make empty. 8682. 9689.
—— *v. neut.* To depart; to go away. 11462. T. ii. 912.
VOIDED, *part. pa.* Removed. 11507. 11613.
VOLAGE, *adj.* FR. Light; giddy. 17188. R. 1284.
VOLATILE, *n.* FR. Wild fowls; game. 13002.
VOLUNTEE, *n.* FR. Will. R. 5276.
VOLUPERE, *n.* A woman's cap. 3241. A night-cap. 4301.
VOLYPERE. KERCHER. *Teristrum.* Prompt. Parv. But *theristrum* signifies properly *a veil.* See Du Cange in v.
VOUCHE, *v.* FR. *Vouchen sauf.* 11885. To vouchsafe. *Voucheth sauf.* 11355. Vouchsafe ye. *As ye have made present, the king* VOUCHES it SAVE. P. L. 260.
UP, *prep.* SAX. Upon. *Ther lith on up my wombe and up myn hed* 4288. There lieth one upon my belly and upon my head. *Up peine.* 1709. 2545. Upon pain. *Up peril.* 6727. Upon peril.
—— *adv.* SAX. *Up on lond.* 704. Up in the country. *Up so doun.* 1379. 16093. P. 151, col. 2, l. 53. Upside down. *The londe was tourned* UP SO DOUN. *Conf. Am.* 37. 159. *But Pandare up.* T. iii. 549. An elliptical expression, of which it is not easy to give the precise meaning.
UPPER, *comp. d.* Higher. F. ii. 376.
UPHAF, *pa. t.* of UPHEVE, *v.* SAX. Heaved up. 2430.
UPHEPING, *n.* SAX. Accumulation. Bo. ii. pr. 3. *Cumulum.* Orig.
UPON, *adv.* 6964. *He had upon a courtepy of grene.* He had on a courtepy, &c. Or perhaps it is an elliptical expression for *He had upon him.* See ver. 6141.
UPPEREST, *adj. superl.* Highest. Bo. i. pr. 1.
UPRIGHT, *adj.* SAX. Strait. *Upright as a bolt.* 3264. Strait as an arrow. It is applied indifferently to persons *lying*, as well as standing. 4264. 6350. 13246. 13541. 14489. 15048.
URCHON, *n.* A hedge-hog. R. 3135.
URE, *n.* FR. Fortune; destiny. B. K. 152. C. L. 684.
URED, *adj.* Fortunate. *Wel ured.* C. D. 144.
USAGE, *n.* FR. Experience; practice. 2450.
USANT, *part. pr.* FR. Using; accustomed. 3938. P. 163, col. 2, l. 14.
UTTER, *comp. d.* of OUT, *adv.* SAX. Outward; more out. 15966. T. iii. 665.
UTTERESTE, *superl. d.* Uttermost. 8663.
UTTERLY, *adv.* FR. *Oultrément.* Thoroughly; entirely. 8829. L. W. 1488.
UTTREN, *inf. m.* of *Utter*, *v.* SAX. To publish. 16302.
—— *pr. t. pl.* 6103. Give out; sell.

W.

WADE, *pr. n.* 9298. See the note.—See also Cambden. Brit. 907. and Charlton's Hist. of Whitby, p. 40.
—— *v.* SAX. LAT. To pass through water, without swimming. 7666.—To pass, generally. 9558. 14412. q.?
WAFERERS, *n. pl.* Sellers of wafers; a sort of cakes. 12413.
WAFOURES, *n. pl.* Wafers; a sort of cakes. 3379.
WAGET. 3321. See the note. But, upon the whole, I believe that *a light waget* should be understood to mean *a light blue colour.*
WAIMENTING, *n.* SAX. Lamentation. 904. 997.
WAINE, *n.* SAX. A waggon. Bo. iv. m. 1.
WAITE, *v.* FR. To watch. 3295.
WAKE, *v.* SAX. To watch. 7482. C. D. 1904.
WALACHIE, *pr. n.* Walachia. Du. 1024.
WALA WA, or WA LA WA, *interj.* SAX. Woe! alas! 946. See the note. *Wa la wa the while!* 4790. Alas the time!
WALNOTE, *n.* SAX. A walnut, i. e. a French, or foreign nut. F. iii. 191.
WALWE, *v.* SAX. To tumble about; to wallow. 6667. 6684
WALWING, *part. pr.* 3616.
WAN, *pa. t.* of WIN, *v.* SAX. Gained. 444. 7059.
WANE, *v.* SAX. To decrease. 2080. 3027.
WANG, *n.* SAX. A cheek-tooth. 4028.
WANGER, *n.* SAX. A support for the cheek; a pillow. 13840.
WANHOPE, *n.* SAX. Despair. 1251. P. 172, col. 1, l. 21.
WANTRUST, *n.* SAX. Distrust. 17230.
WAPED, *part. pa.* SAX. Stupefied. An. 217.
WARDECORPS, *n.* FR. Body-guard. 5941.
WARDEIN, *n.* FR. A warden *of a College.* 3997.—A guard. T. iii. 666.—A keeper of a gate. T. v. 1177. WARDEINS, *pl.* Guards; watchmen. 6788.
WARDERERE. 4099. perhaps a corruption of the FR. *Garde arriere.*
WARDROPE, *n.* FR. *Garderobe.* A house of office. 13502.
WARIANGLES. 6990. See the note; and Cotgrave, in v. *Pie* and *Engrouée*, where he explains "the *Wariangle* to be a small *Woodpecker*, black and white of colour, and but halfe as big as the ordinary green one."
WARICE, WARISH, *v.* FR. To heal. 12840.—*v. neut.* To recover from sickness. M. 107, col. 1, l. 22.
WARISON, *n.* R. 1537. seems to be put for Reward. *Son merite.* Orig. WARYSON. *Donativum.* Prompt. Parv.
WARNE, *v.* SAX. To caution; to apprize. 8949. 16058.—To refuse. R. 3652. 3730.
WARNESTORE, *v.* To furnish; to store. M. 113, col. 1, l. 23.
WARRIE, *v.* SAX. To abuse; to speak evil of. 4792. T. ii. 1619.
WASHEN, *part. pa.* of WASH, *v.* SAX. 3311.
WASTEL-BREDE. 147. Cake-bread; Bread made of the finest flower; from the FR. *Gasteau*, a cake.
WASTOUR, *n.* FR. A spoiler. 9409.
WATE, *v.* SAX. To know. R. 5399.
WATERING OF SEINT THOMAS. 828. A place *for watering horses*, I suppose, a little out of the borough of South wark, in the road to Canterbury. The same place, I apprehend, was afterwards called St. *Thomas a Water-*

tings, probably from some chapel dedicated to that Saint. It was a place of execution in Q. Elizabeth's time. Wood. Ath. Oxon. i. 229.

WATLYNGE STRETE. F. ii. 431. An old street in London.

WAVE, *pa. t.* of WEAVE, *v.* SAX. Wove. L. W. 2353.

WAWE, *n.* SAX. A wave. 1960.

WAY, *n.* SAX. is often put for *the time* in which a certain space can be passed through. *A furlong way*. 3637. 4197. *A mile way*. 13206. Any short time.—*At the leste wey* 16144. seems to signifie no more than *At the lest*. 4458. At least.—*A devil way*. 3136. 7824. *A twenty devil way*. 3713. 4255. 16250.

—— *adv.* Away. *Do way*. 3287. 15955. Do away; put away.

WAVE, *v.* SAX. To weigh. L. W. 398.—To press with weight. L. W. 1786.

WEBBE, *n.* SAX. A weaver. 364.

WEDDE, *n.* SAX. A pawn, or pledge. *To wedde*. 1220. 13353. For a pawn. *And leyde* TO WEDDE *Normandie*. R. G. 393.

WEDE, *n.* SAX. Clothing; apparel. 8739. *Under wede*. 13845. See the note; and R. 6359. where *Under wede* seems to signifie simply *In* my *clothing*.

—— *n.* SAX. A weed; an useless herb. T. i. 947.

WEHEE. A word to express the neighing of a horse. 4064. P. P. 36 b.

WEIVE, *v.* SAX. To forsake. 17127. 17344.—To decline; to refuse. T. ii. 284.

—— *v. neut.* To depart. 9357. 10298.

WEIVED, *part. pa.* Departed. 4728.

WEKE, *v.* SAX. To grow weak. T. iv. 1144.

—— *adj.* SAX. Weak. 889.

WEL, *adv.* SAX. Well; in a good condition. 4372. WEL WAS THE WENCHE, *with him mighte mete*. C. D. 270. WEL WERE THEY, *that thider might twin*. It is joined to other adverbs and adjectives, as *full* and *right* are; and still more frequently to verbs; in the sense of the FR. *bien*.

WELDE, *v.* SAX. To govern; to wield. 7529. 14583.

WELDY, *adj.* SAX. Active. T. ii. 636.

WELE, *adv.* for WEL. 928. 2233.

—— *n.* SAX. Wealth; prosperity. 3103. 4595. 9166.

WELEFUL. *adj.* Productive of happiness. 4871.

WELEFULNESS, *n.* SAX. Happiness. Bo. ii. pr. 8.

WELKE, *pa. t.* of WALK, *v.* SAX. Walked. C. D. 828.

WELKED, *part. pa.* of WELKE, *v.* SAX. Withered; mouldy. 5859. 12672.

WELKIN, *n.* SAX. The sky. 9000.

WELL, *n.* SAX. A spring. 7924. *Well of vices*. 4743.—*of perfection*. 5689.—*of alle gentillesse*. 10819.

WELLE, *v.* SAX. To flow, as from a spring. T. iv. 709.

WELMETH. R. 1561. seems to be put for WELLETH; Springeth.

WELTE, *pa. t.* of WELDE. 14016.

WEL-THEWED, *adj.* SAX. Endowed with good qualities. Bo. iv. pr. 6.

WELWILLY, *adj.* SAX. Favourable; propitious. T. iii. 1263.

WEMME, *n.* SAX. A spot; a fault. 10435. R. 930. *Without* WEMME. P. P. 98 b.

WENCHE, *n.* SAX. A young woman. 4165. It is sometimes used in an opprobrious sense. 10076. *I am a gentil woman and no wenche*.

WEND for WENED, *pa. t.* of WENE. Thought; intended. 3693. 4257. WENDEN, *pl.* T. iv. 683. 724.

WENDE, *v.* SAX. To go. 21. 1393.

—— *n.* SAX. Guess; conjecture. B. K. 463. perhaps for WENE.

WENE, *n.* SAX. Guess; supposition. *Withouten wene*. R. 574. 732. Not by supposition; certainly.

—— *v.* SAX. To think; to suppose. 2197. 5893.

WENT, *part. pa.* of WENDE. Gone. 3665. 13470.

WENTE, WENT, *pa. t.* of WENDE. 78. 257. *Went at borde*. 6110. Lived as a boarder. WENTEN, *pl.* 822.

WENT, *n.* A way; a passage. T. iii. 788. F. i. 182.—A turn, in walking. T. ii. 815. T. v. 605. in bed. T. ii. 63.

—— *v.* F. L. 150. for WANT.

WEP, *pa. t.* of WEPE, *v.* SAX. Wept. 2823.

WEPELY, *adj.* SAX. Causing tears. Bo. iii. m. 12.

WEPEN, *n.* SAX. A weapon. 1593.

WERCHE, *n. & v.* as WERKE.

WERE for WEREN, *ind. m. pa. t. pl.* of AM, *v.* SAX. 18. 41. It is sometimes used for HAD, according to the French custom, with reflected verbs. 12595. *Thise riotoures*—WERE *set* HEM *in a taverne for to drinke*.—S'ETOIENT *mis*, S'ETOIENT *assis*.

—— *subj. m. pa. t. sing.* 89. *As it were*. 148. *If on of hem were*. 1150. *Whether she were*. 2115. *Were it*. 2288. *It were a game*.

—— *v.* SAX. To wear. 2177. 2950.—To defend. 2552.

—— *n.* FR. *Guerre*. Confusion. *His herte in such a* WERE *is set*. R. 5699. *Son cueur a mys en tel* GUERRE. Orig. 5289. L. W. 2675. *And in a* WERE *gan I wexe and with myself to dispute*. P. P. 54. b.

—— *n.* SAX. A wear, for catching fish. T. iii. 35. A. F. 138.

WEREN, *pa. t. pl.* of AM, *v.* SAX. 28, 9. Were.

WERKE, *n.* SAX. Work. 3311. 12274. WERKES, *pl.* 3308.

—— *v.* SAX. To work. 3133. 3530, 1.

WERNE, *v.* 5915. as WARNE.

WERRE, *n.* FR. War. 47. 1673. In T. v. 1392. it seems to be used as WERE.

WERREIE, *v.* FR. To make war against. 1546. 10394. 14338.

WERSE, *comp. d.* of ILL, *adv.* SAX. Worse. 4348. 5753.

—— *comp. d.* of BAD, *adj.* SAX. Worse. 1226. 3876.

WERSTE, *superl. d.* of BAD. Worst. 9094. 13091.

WERY, *adj.* SAX. Weary. 4105. 4934.

WESH, *pa. t.* of WASH, *v.* SAX. Washed. 2285. 4873.

WESTREN, *inf. m. v.* SAX. To tend toward the West. T. ii. 906.

WETE, *adj.* SAX. Wet. 2903.

—— *v.* SAX. To wet. T. iii. 1121.

—— *v.* SAX. To know. 7096. 10305.

WETHER, *n.* SAX. The weather. 10366.—A castrated ram. 3542. T. iv. 1374.

WETING, *n.* SAX. Knowledge. 1613. 6231.

WEVE, *v.* SAX. To weave. L. W. 2341.

—— *v.* SAX. To put off; to prevent. T. ii. 1050. See WEIVE.

WEX, *pa. t.* of WAXE, or WEXE, *v.* SAX. Waxed; grew. 4238.

WEXING, *part. pr.* Increasing. 2080.

WEYEDEN, *pa. t. pl.* Weighed. 456. See WAYE.

WHAT, *pron. interrog.* SAX. is often used by itself, as a sort of interjection. 856. WHAT? *welcome be the cutte*.—3477 WHAT? *Nicholas!* WHAT *how? man!*—3491. WHAT! *thinke on God*.—See also 3900. 6496. 7820.

—— *pron. indef.* Something. *A little what*. Bo. iv. pr. 6. Μικρόν τι. *What for love and for distress*. 1455. Partly for love and partly f. d. See 3965. 4441, 2. F. ii. 43. *Wete ye what?* 10305. 17031. Do ye know something? *Ne elles what*. F. iii. 651. Nor any thing else. Οὐδ' ἄλλως τι.

—— when joined to a *n. subst.* (either expressed or understood) is a mere *adj* answering to *Qualis*. LAT. *Quel*. FR. 40, 41. *What they weren*. 1705. What *men* they were.—*What so*. 524. 6873. *What that*. 5602. 7113. Whatsoever.

WHEDER, *conj.* SAX. Whether. 9838. 15141.

WHELM, *v.* SAX. T. i. 139. To sink; to depress. WHELMYN A VESSELL. *Supprimo*. Prompt. Parv.

WHENNES, *adv.* SAX. Whence. 12269.

WHER, *conj.* SAX. Whether. 7032. 10893.

—— *adv.* SAX. Where. 423. 899.

—— in composition, signifies *Which*. See HERE and THER. *Wherefore*. 8533. *Wherein*. 13732. *Wherthrough*. R. 3733. *Wherwith*. 304.—or *What*, when used interrogatively. *Wherof*. 5654. *Wherwith*. 5713.

WHETHER, *adj.* SAX. Which *of two*. 1858. 6816.

WHETTE, *part. pa.* of WHET, *v.* SAX. Sharpened. T. v. 1759.

WHICHE, *pron. rel.* SAX. Who. 16482. Whom. 13083.—*adj.* What; what sort of. 2677. 5621. 6875.

WHILE, *n.* SAX. Time. *In this mene while*. 7097. In the mean time.—*How he might quite hire while*. 5004. How he might requite *her time, pains*, &c. L. W. 2225. R. 1542. *God can ful wel your* WHILE *quite*. So MS. Hunter

WHILERE, *adv.* SAX. Some time before. 16796.

WHILKE, *adj.* SAX. Which. 4076. 4169.

WHILOM, *adv.* SAX. Once, on a time. 861. 9121.
WHINE, *v.* SAX. To utter a plaintive cry. 5968. See An. 158.
WHITE, *adj.* SAX. Fair; specious. T. iii. 1573.
——— *v.* To grow white. T. v. 276.
WHO, *pron. interrog.* SAX. 1350. 1456.
WHOS, *gen. ca. sing.* 5438.
WHO, *pron. rel.* SAX. 3154. It is generally expressed by *that*.
WHOS, *gen. ca. sing.* 7908. 9047.
WHO, *pron. indef.* T. iii. 268.

For wel thou wost, the name as yet of her
Amongcs the people, AS WHO SAYTH, *haloweed is.*

Where *as who sayth* seems to be equivalent to *as one should say*. See also Du. 559. In Bo. iii. pr. 4. the same phrase is used to introduce a fuller explanation of a passage; as we might use—*That is to say.*—WHO SO. 743. WHO THAT. 807. Whosoever. In ver. 4298. there is a phrase which I know not how to explain grammatically. *But sikerly she w'iste* WHO WAS WHO. See also C. D. 1305,6.
WIDE-WHERE, *adv.* SAX. Widely; far and near. 4556. T. iii. 405. *Conf. Am.* 162.
WIERDES, *n. pl.* SAX. The fates, or destinies; *Parcæ*. T. iii. 618.
WIF, *n.* SAX. A wife. 2260.—A woman. 6580.
WIFHOOD, *n.* SAX. The state of a wife. 10064.
WIFLES, *adj.* SAX. Unmarried. 9112. 9124.
WIFLY, *adj.* SAX. Becoming a wife. 8305.
WIGHT, *n.* SAX. A person, male or female. 2108. 13917. 4234.—A small space of time. 4281.—Weight. T. ii. 1585. A witch. 3484. WYTCH CLEPYD WYGHT MARE. *Epiaites.* Prompt. Parv.
——— *adj.* SAX. Active; swift. 4084. 14273. *Of hem that ben deliver and* WIGHT. *Conf. Am.* 177 b.
WIGHTES, *n. pl.* Witches. 3479. See the note.
WIKE, *n.* for WEKE. T. ii. 1273.
WIKET *n* FR. A wicket. 9919.
WIKKE, *adj.* SAX. Wicked. 5448. 15429.
WILLIAM ST. AMOUR, *pr. n.* R. 6763. A doctor of the Sorbonne in the XIIIth Century, who took a principal part in the dispute between the University of Paris and the Dominican Friers. See Moreri, in v.
WILLY, *adj.* SAX. Favourable. B. K. 628.
WILN for WILLEN, *pl. n.* of WILLE, *v.* SAX. 6870. 12848.
WILNE, *v.* SAX. To desire. 2566.
WIMPLE, *n.* FR. A covering for the neck. It is distinguished from a *veil*, which covered the head also. R. 3864.

Wering a vaile, instede of wimple,
As nonnes don in hir abbey.

WINDAS, *n.* FR. *Guindal.* An engine to raise stones, &c. 10498.
WINDE, *v.* SAX. To turn round. 6634.
——— as WENDE; To go. R. 2055.
WINE OF APE. 16993. See the note.
WINNE. R. 3674. *v.* SAX. To gain. 715. 7003. *To winne to.* R. 3674. To attain. See L. W. 2416.
WIRRY, *v.* SAX. To worry. R. 6264.
WIS, *adv.* SAX. Certainly. 11780. See YWIS.
WISE, *n.* SAX. Manner. 1663. T. ii. 921.
WISLY, *adv.* SAX. Certainly. 1965. 3992.
WISSE. *v.* SAX. To teach; to direct. 6590. 6991. *So God me wisse.* 7440. So may God direct me. WYSSYN OR LEDYN. *Dirigo.* Prompt. Parv.
WISTE, *pa. t.* of WISTE, *v.* SAX. Knew. 1158. 8690.
WITE, *v.* SAX. To know. 9614. R. 7061.—To blame. 10051. 14588.—To impute to. *Wite it the ale of Southwark.* 3142. Impute it to the a. o. S.—or, Blame the a. o. S. for it. 14756.
——— *n.* SAX. Blame. 16421.
WITH, *prep.* SAX. is used in the sense of *by*. 4895. *Was with the leon frette;* was devoured by the lion.—*In with his thought.* 9460. *In with hire bosom.* 9818. Within his t. Within hire b.—*With meschance.* 5316. 7797. *With meschance and with misaventure.* 6916. *With sorwe and with meschance.* 4410. *With sorwe.* 5922. are phrases of the same import as *God yeve him meschance.* 5334. *God yeve me sorwe.* 5733. They are all to be considered as parenthetical curses, used with more or less seriousness. And so are the following phrases. *With evil prefe.* 5929. *With harde grace.* 7810. *With sory grace.* 12810.
WITHHOLDE, *v.* SAX. To stop. 14002.
WITHHOLDEN, WITHHOLD, *part. pa.* Retained; detained. 513. M. 107, col. 2, l. 30. 15813.
WITHSAIN, *inf. m.* of WITHSAY, *v.* SAX. 1142.
WITHSAYE, WITHSEYE, *v.* SAX. To contradict; to deny. 15915. L. W. 367.
WITNESFULLY, *adv.* SAX. Evidently. Bo. iv. pr. 5.
WITNESSE, *n.* SAX. Testimony; a witness. *Witnesse on Mida.* 6533. *Witnesse on Matheu.* 12568.
WITTE, *n.* SAX. Understanding; capacity. 748. *To my witte.* 11187. F. ii. 194. In my judgement.
WITTES, *n. pl.* SAX. The senses of man. M. 114, col. 1, l. 61.
WIVE, *n.* for WIF. 1862.
WIVERE, *n.* SAX. A serpent. T. iii. 1012.
WLATSOM, *adj.* SAX. Loathsome. 14542. 15059.
WO, *n.* SAX. Woe; sorrow. 1360. 1384. *Wo were us.* 8015. *Wher me were wo.* 10893. are expressions derived from the Saxon language, in which *us* and *me* were equivalent to *nobis* and *mihi*, without the addition of the prep. *to*.
——— *adj.* SAX. Sorrowful. R. 312. C. L. 32.
WO-BEGON. 3372. 3658. Far gone in woe. See BEGON.
WODE, WOOD, *adj.* SAX. Mad. 3507. Violent. 3517. *For wode.* L. W. 2409. F. iii. 657. Like any thing mad. See ver. 2952. *Into the fire, that brent as it were wood.*
——— *v.* SAX. To grow mad. 15935. Bo. iv. m. 5.
WODEWALE, R. 658. *pr. n.* of a bird. Widewnel. BELG. *Oriolus.* Kilian. According to Ray, our *Witwall* is a sort of Wood-pecker. Synop. Av. p. 43.
WOL, *v. auxil.* SAX. To will. 42. 805. It is used sometimes by itself, the *infin.* v. being understood. 10810. *As she to water wolde;* i. e. would *dissolve* into w. 1093. *And to the wood he wol;* i. e. will *go.* 16453. *Ful many a man hath he begiled er this, And wol;* i. e. will *begile.*
WOLDE, *pa. t.* Would. 144. WOLDEN, *pl.* 4666.—*pa. t. subj. m. Wolde God!* 9932,5. *God wolde!* Du. 665. 814. O that God were willing! *Ne wolde God!* 11068. God forbid!
WOLD, *part. pa.* Willed; been willing. M. 107, col. 1, l. 67, 114, col. 1, l. 62. L. W. 1207.
WOMANHEDE, *n.* Womanhood; the virtue of a woman. 8951.
WONDE, *v.* SAX. Wandian. To desist through fear. L. W. 1185.
——— *pa. t.* C. M. V. 102. may perhaps be deduced from WINDE; to turn; *to bend.* See T. i. 257.

The yerde is bet, that bowen wol *and* WINDE,
Than that that brest.

——— *pa. t.* of WONE. Dwelled. L. W. 2241.
WONDER, *adj.* SAX. Wonderful. 2075. 5465.
WONE, *n.* SAX. Custom; usage. 337. 13434. Du. 475.—Habitation. 7687. 13730.—A heap; an assembly. R. 1673. L. W. 2159.
——— *v.* SAX. To dwell. 7745.
WONEDEN, *pa. t. pl.* Dwelled. 2929.
WONED, *part. pa.* Wont, accustomed. T. i. 511. Du. 140.
WONING, *n.* SAX. A dwelling. 608.
WONNE, *part. pa.* of WINNE, *v.* SAX. Won; conquered. 51. 59.—Begotten. L. W. 2553.
WONT, *part. pa.* of WONE. Accustomed. Bo. iv. pr. 4.
WOOD, *adj.* as WODE.
WOODNESS, *n.* Madness. 3452. 12430.
WORDLES, *adj.* SAX. Speechless. C. D. 514.
WORLDES, *gen. c.* of WORLD, *n.* SAX. is used in the sense of the *adj.* WORLDLY. *Every worldes sore.* 2851. *My worldes bliss.* 15206.
WORT, *n.* SAX. A cabbage. 8102. 15227.—New beer, in a state of fermentation. 16281.
WORTH, *v.* SAX. To be; to go. C. M. 95. *Wo worthe!* T. ii. 344,5,6. Unhappy be! or Wo be to!—To climb; to mount. 13681. T. ii. 1011.
WOST for WOTEST. 1165. 1176. 6144. Knowest.
WOTE, WOT, *v.* SAX. To know. 1149. 1262,4,5
WOT, *pa. t.* Knew. 4856.
WOWE (rather *Woe*), *v.* SAX. To woo. T. v. 791. L. W. 1945

WOXE, *pa. t.* of WAXE, or WEXE, *v.* SAX. Grew. 7703.
WOXEN, *part. pa.* Grown. T. v. 1014.
WRAIE, *v.* SAX. To betray; discover. T. iii. 285.
WRATHEN, *inf. m. v.* SAX. To make angry. 17029. P. 148, col. 2, l. 41.
WRAWE, *adj.* SAX. Peevish; angry. 16995. WRAWE. FROWARD. ONGOODLY. *Perversus. Bilosus.* Prompt. Parv.
WRAWNESS, *n.* Peevishness. P. 162, col. 1, l. 8.
WRAY, *v.* 11256. as WRAIE.
WRECHE, *n.* SAX. Revenge. 14521. 14533.
WRENCHES, *n. pl.* SAX. Frauds; stratagems. 16849.
WREST, *v.* SAX. To twist. B. K. 48. *The nightingale with so great might hire voice began out wrest.* To turn forcibly. T. iv. 1427.
WRETCHES, Bo. ii. pr. 7. should probably be WRETCHED.
WRETHEN, *part. pa.* of WRITHE. P. L. 57. *Wrethen in fere;* Twisted together. In Urry's Edit. it is printed—*Within in fere.*
WREYE, *v.* 3503, 7. as WRAIE.
WRIE, *v.* SAX. To cover. 7409. R. 6795.—To turn; to incline. 17211. T. ii. 906.
WRIGHT, *n.* SAX. A workman. 616.
WRINE, for WRIEN, *inf. m.* of WRIE. R. 6684.
WRING, *v.* SAX. To squeeze so as to express moisture. 13706.
WRITHE, *v.* SAX. To twist; to turn aside. 3283. T. iv. 986.
WRITHING, *n.* A turning. 10441.
WRONGE, *part. pa.* of WRING. *His hondes wronge.* T. iv. 1171. Later writers have used the same expression of distress. I suppose it means to clasp the hands, and *squeeze* them *strongly* one against the other. I do not recollect a similar expression in any other language.
WROTE, *v.* SAX. To dig with the snout, as swine do. P. 149, col. 2, l. 30. *Or like a worm, that* wroteth *in a tree.* Lydg. *Trag.* 33.
WROUGHT, *part. pa.* of WORKE, *v.* SAX. Made. 11184.

Y.

Y at the beginning of many words, especially *verbs* and *participles*, is merely a corruption of the Saxon Ge, which has remained uncorrupted in the other collateral branches of the Gothic language. What the power of it may have been originally, it is impossible, I apprehend, now to determine. In Chaucer it does not appear to have any effect upon the sense of a word; so that there seems to be no necessity for inserting in a Glossary such words as *yblessed*, *ygranted*, &c. which differ not in signification from *blessed*, *granted*, &c. Some, however, of this sort are inserted, which may serve at least to shew more clearly the extent of this practice in Chaucer's time. Several other words are shortly explained under this letter, of which a more full explanation may be found under their respective *second* letters.
YA, *adv.* SAX. Yea. 3455. 8231. It is used emphatically with *both.* 4827. *Ya, bothe younge and olde.* 6832. *Ye, bothe faire and good.*
YAF, *pa. t.* of YEVE, *v.* SAX. Gave. 498. 1902.
YALTE for YELTE. R. 4904. *Yalte him.* Yieldeth himself. *Se rend*, Orig.
YARE, *adj.* SAX. Ready. L. W. 2258.
YATE, *n.* SAX. A gate. 8889.
YAVE, *pa. t.* of YEVE. Gave. 304. 602.
Y-BE, *part. pa.* Been. 10775.
Y-BERIED, *part. pa.* Buried. 948.
Y-BETE, 981. See the note. and R. 837.
Y-BLENT, *part. pa.* of BLEND. R. 1610 Blinded.
Y-BLENT, *part. pa.* of BLENCHE. 3751. Shrunk; started aside. See the note on ver. 1080.
Y-BLINT, *part. pa.* 3806. Blinded.
Y-BORE, *part. pa.* of BERE. 390. Born; carried.
Y-BOURDED, *part. pa.* Jested. A. F. 589.
Y-BRENT, *part. pa.* of BRENNE. 948. Burned.
Y-CHAPPED, *part. pa.* 368. Furnished with chapes. From *chappe.* FR.
Y-CLOUTED, *part. pa.* R. 223. Wrapped in clouts, or rags.
Y-CORVEN, *part. pa.* 2015. Cut. See CORVEN.
Y-COUPLED, *part. pa.* 9095.
Y-CRASED, *part. pa.* Du. 324. Broken.
Y-DELED, *part. pa.* 7831. Distributed.
Y-DIGHT, *part. pa.* T. v. 541. Adorned.
Y-DO, *part. pa.* 2536. Done; finished.
Y-DRAWE, *part. pa.* 946. Drawn.
YE, *adv.* SAX. as YA. 9212. *Ye wis.* T. ii. 887. Yea certainly.
YEDDINGES, 237. See the note. The Prompt. Parv. makes *Yedding* to be the same as *Geste*, which it explains thus. GEST OR ROMAWNCE. *Gestio.* So that *of yeddinges* may perhaps mean *of story-telling.*
YEDE, *part. pa.* of YEDE, *v.* SAX. Went. 13249. 16699.
YEFTE, *n.* SAX. A gift. 9185. YEFTES, *pl.* 2200. 9186.
YELDE, *v.* SAX. To yield; to give. 6494. 8719.—To pay. 5712. *God yelde you!* 7759. God reward you!
YELLEDEN, *pa. t. pl.* of YELLE, *v.* SAX. 15395.
YELPE, *v.* SAX. To prate; to boast. 2240. T. iii. 308.
YELTE for YELDETH. T. i. 396.
YEMAN, *n.* SAX. A servant of middling rank; a bailif. 6962. 6977.—THE KNIGHTES YEMEN. See his CHARACTER, ver. 101—17.—THE CHANONES YEMAN. See his PROLOGUE, ver. 16022—16187. YEMEN, *pl.* 2511. 2730. See the n. on ver. 101.
YEMANRIE, *n.* The rank of Yeoman. See the n. on ver. 101.
YERDE, *n.* SAX. A rod, or staff, 149. T. ii. 154. *Under the yerde.* 13027. See the note.
YERE for YERES, *n. pl.* SAX. Years. 4919. 11125.
YERNE, *adj.* SAX. Brisk; eager. 3257.
——— *adv.* Briskly; eagerly. 6575. 12332. Early. T. iii. 337. *As yerne.* T. iii. 151. T. iv. 112. Soon; immediately
——— *v.* To desire; to seek eagerly. T. iii. 152. T. iv. 198.
YERNING, *n.* Activity; diligence. R. 5951. *Esveil.* Orig.
YETEN, *part pa.* R. 5702. Gotten.
YEVE, *v.* SAX. To give. 507. 613.
YEVEN, YEVE, *part. pa.* Given. 1088. 1091. 7135.
Y-FALLE, *part. pa.* 25. Fallen.
Y-FEINED, *part. pa.* 8405. *Lordes hestes may not ben y-feined.* The commands of sovereigns may not be executed with a feigned, pretended zeal; they must be executed strictly and fully.
Y-FETTE, *part. pa.* 10488. Fetched.
Y-FONDEN, *part. pa.* 10154. Found.
Y-FOSTERED, *part. pa.* 3944. Educated.
Y-FRETEN, *part. pa.* L. W. 1949. Devoured
Y-GETEN, *part. pa.* 3564. Gotten.
Y-GLOSED, *part. pa.* 16983. Flattered.
Y-GLUED, *part. pa.* 10496. Glewed; fastened with glew.
Y-GO, *part. pa.* 288. Gone.
Y-GRAVE, *part. pa.* 6078. Buried.
Y-HALOWED, *part. pa.* L. W. 1869. Kept holy.
Y-HERD, *part. pa.* 3736. Covered with hair.
Y-HOLD, *part. pa.* 1309. L. W. 1952. Beholden
Y-JAPED, *part. pa.* 17094. Tricked; deceived.
Y-LESSED, *part. pa.* T. i. 1090. Relieved. See LESSED.
Y-LICHE, Y-LIKE, *adj.* SAX. Resembling. 594. 1541. Equal. 2736.
——— *adv.* SAX. Equally; alike. 2528. 7796.
Y-LIMED, *part. pa.* 6516. Limed; caught, as with bird-lime.
Y-LODGED, *part. pa.* 14997. Lodged.
Y-MASKED, *part. pa.* T. iii. 1740. Mashed, or Meshed. *Masche.* BELG. *Macula retis.* Kilian.
Y-MEINT, *part. pa.* 2172. Mingled.
Y-MELL, *prep.* SAX. Among. 4169.
YMENEUS, *pr. n.* Hymenæus. 9604.
YNOUGH, YNOW, *adv.* SAX. Enough. 11020. 13988.
YOLDEN, *part. pa.* of YELDE. Given. 3054.—Yielded. T. iii. 1217.—Repaid. R. 4556.
YONGHEDE, *n.* SAX. Youth. R. 351.
YORE, *adv.* SAX. Of a long time. 4692. 7944.—A little before. 9990.—*Yore agon.* 13639. Long ago. *In olde times yore.* 9016. *Of time yore.* 11275.
YOVE, *p. t.* of YEVE. C. L. 688. Gave.
YOURE, *pron. poss.* SAX. is used for YOURES. 16716. T. ii. 587. L. W. 683. C. L. 855.
YOURES, *pron. poss.* SAX. used generally, when the noun, to which it belongs, is understood, or placed before it. 7495. 8379. 10911. *He was an old felaw of youres.* 12956. He was an old companion *of yours*, i. e. *of, or among, your companions.* See the Essay, &c. n. 29.

YOUTHEDE, *n.* SAX. Youth. R. 4931.
YOXE, *v.* SAX. To hickup. 4149. YVXYN. *Singultio.* Prompt. PRV.
Y-PIKED, *part. pa.* 367. Picked; spruce.
Y-QUEINT, *part. pa.* 3752. Quenched.
Y-REIGHT, *pa. t.* F. iii. 284. Reached.
Y-REKEN. 3880. seems to be put for the old *part. pr.* Y-REKEND. Reeking.
YREN, *n.* SAX. Iron. 1996. 6488.
Y-RENT, *part. pa.* 5265. Torn.
Y-RONNE, YRONNEN, *part. pa.* 3891. 2695. Run.
Y-SATELED, *part. pa.* 10279. Settled; established.
YSE, *n.* SAX. ICE. F. iii. 40.
Y-SERVED, *part. pa.* Treated. 905.
Y-SETTE, *part. pa.* 10487. Set; placed. Appointed. 1637.
Y-SHENT, *part. pa.* 6894. Damaged.
Y-SHOVE, *part. pa.* L. W. 726. Pushed forwards.
Y SLAWE, *part. pa.* 945. 4904. Slain.
YSOPE, *pr. n.* M. 110, col. 2, l. 46. So the name of the Fabulist was commonly written, notwithstanding the distinction pointed out by the following technical verse.

"Ysopus *est herba, sed* Æsopus *dat bona verba.*"

In this and many other passages, which are quoted from Æsop by writers of the middle ages, it is not easy to say what author they mean. The Greek collections of fables, which are now current under the name of Æsop, were unknown, I apprehend, in this part of the world, at the time that *Melibee* was written. Phædrus too had disappeared. Avienus indeed was very generally read. He is quoted as Æsop by John of Salisbury, Polycrat. L. vii. *Ut Æsopo, vel Avieno credas.*

But the name of Æsop was chiefly appropriated to the anonymous * author of 60 fables, in Elegiac metre, which are printed in Nevelet's collection under the title of "*Anonymi fabulæ Æsopicæ.*" I have seen an Edition of them in 1503, by Wynkyn de Worde, in which they are entitled simply "*Esopi fabulæ*" The subjects are for the most part plainly taken from Phædrus; but it may be doubted whether the author copied from the original work of Phædrus, or from some version of it into Latin prose. Several versions of this kind are still extant in MS. One of very considerable antiquity has been published by Nilant, Lugd. Bat. 1709, under the title of *Fabulæ Antiquæ*, together with another of a later date, which is pretended to have been made from the Greek by an Emperour Romulus, for the use of his son Tiberinus. They all shew evident marks of being derived from one common origin, like what has been observed of the several Greek collections of Æsopean fables in prose (*Dissert. de Babrio.* Lond. 1776.); like them too they differ very much, one from another, in style, order of fables, and many little particulars; and, what is most material, each of them generally contains a few fables, either invented or stolen by its respective compiler, which are not to be found in the other collections; so that it is often impracticable to verifie a quotation from Æsop in the writers of Chaucer's time, unless we happen to light upon the identical book of fables which the writer who quotes had before him.

I have printed in the Discourse, &c. n. 29. a fable of *the Cock and the Fox*, from the French *Esope* of *Marie*, which is not to be found in any other collection that I have seen, and which, I suppose, furnished Chaucer with the subject of his *Nonnes Preestes tale.* In the same French Æsop, and in a Latin MS. *Bibl. Reg.* 15 A. vii, there is a fable, which, I think, might have given the hint for Prior's *Ladle.* "A country fellow one day laid hold of a faery (*un folet*, FR.), who, in order to be set at liberty, gave him three wishes. The man goes home, and gives two of them to his wife. Soon after, as they are dining upon a chine of mutton, the wife feels a longing for the marrow, and not being able to get it, she wishes that her husband had an iron beak (*long com li Witecocs.* FR. long as the Woodcock) to extract this marrow for her. An excrescence being immediately formed accordingly, the husband angrily wishes it off from his own face upon his wife's."—And here the story is unluckily defective in both copies; but it is easy to suppose, that the third and last remaining wish was employed by the wife for her own relief.

A fable upon a similar idea, in French verse, may be seen in MS. Bodl. 1687; the same, as I apprehend, with one in the King's library at Paris (MS. n. 7989. fol. 189.) which is entitled "*Les quatre soukaits de Sainz Martin.*" See *Fabliaux*, &c. T. iii. p. 311. The vanity of human wishes is there exposed with more pleasantry than in the story just cited, but as it often happens, with much less decency.

Y-SOWE, *part. pa.* 5653. Sown.
Y-SPREINT, *part. pa.* 2171. Sprinkled.
Y-STICKED, *part. pa.* 1567. Sticked; thrust.
Y-STORVEN, *part. pa.* 2016. Dead.
Y-TAKE, *part. pa.* 3353. Taken.
Y-TEYED, *part. pa.* 459. Tied.
Y-TRESPASED, *part. pa.* M. 114, col. 1, l. 52. Trespassed.
Y-VANISHED, *part. pa.* 6378.
YVEL, *adj.* SAX. Bad; unfortunate. 4172. 4182. YVEL, *adv.* SAX. III. 1129. 3715.
YVOIRE, *n.* FR. Ivory. Du. 946.
Y-WIMPLED, *part. pa.* Covered with a wimple. 472.
Y-WIS, *adv.* SAX. Certainly. 3277. 3705.
Y-WRAKE, *pa. t.* T. v. 1467. Wreaked; revenged.
Y-WRIE, *part. pa.* 2906. Covered.

Z.

ZEUXIS, *pr. n.* 11950. A Grecian painter.

* Several improbable conjectures, which have been made with respect to the real name and age of this writer, may be seen in the *Menagiana*, Vol. i. p. 172. and in Fabric. *Bibl. Lat* Vol. i. p. 376. Ed. Patav. In the edition of these fables in 1503, the commentator, of no great authority, I confess, mentions an opinion of some people, that "*Galterus Angelicus fecit hunc librum sub nomine Esopi.*" I suppose the person meant was *Gualterus Anglicus*, who had been tutor to William II. King of Sicily, and was Archbishop of Palermo about the year 1170. I cannot believe that they were much older than his time; and in the beginning of the next century they seem to be mentioned under the name of *Æsopus*, among the books commonly read in schools, by Eberhardus Bethuniensis in his *Labyrinthus*, Tract. iii *de Versificatione*, v. ii. See Leyser, *Hist. Poet. Med. Ævi.* p. 826. About the middle of the same century (the XIIIth) Vincent of Beauvais in his *Speculum Histor.* L. iii. c 2. gives an account of Æsop, and a large specimen of his fables, *quas Romulus* quidam *de Græco in Latinum transtulit, et ad filium suum Tyberinum dirigit.*" They are all, as I remember, in the printed Romulus.

Soon after the invention of printing, that larger collection of the fables of Æsop was made and published in Germany, which has been mentioned in this Vol p. 202. It is divided into VI books, to which is prefixed a life of Æsop *e Græco-Latina per Rimicium facta.* The three first are composed of the 60 Elegiac fables of the metrical Æsopus, with a few trifling variations; and to each of them is subjoined a fable on the same subject in prose from Romulus. Book IV. contains the remaining fables of Romulus in prose only. The Vth Book has not more than one or two fables which had ever appeared before under the name of Æsop. The rest are taken from the *Gesta Romanorum*, the *Calilah u Damnah* (see p. 201, note *; and p. 202, note ‡) and other obscurer authors. The VIth and last Book contains 17 fables with the following title: *Sequuntur fabulæ novæ Esopi ex translatione Remicii.* There has been a great diversity of opinion among learned men concerning this *Remicius* or *Rimicius* (see Præf. Nilant.), while some have confounded him with the fictitious Romulus, and others have considered him as the Editor of this collection. I have no doubt but the person meant is that *Rinucius* who translated the life of Æsop by Planudes and 96 of his fables, from the Greek into Latin, about the middle of the XVth Century. See Fabric. Bibl. Med Æt. in v RIMICIUS. In his translation of the Epistles of Hippocrates, MS. Harl 3527. he is styled in one place *Verdensis*, and in another *Castilionensis.* All the fables from *Remicius* which compose this VIth Book, as well as the Life of Æsop, which is professedly taken from *Rimicius*, are to be found in this translation by *Rinucius.* There is an Edition of it printed at Milan about 1480; but it might very possibly have come into the hands of the German collector in MS. some years sooner, as the first translations of Greek authors were eagerly sought after and circulated through Europe at that time, when very few persons were capable of reading the original.

WORDS AND PHRASES NOT UNDERSTOOD.

Afere. R. 4073.
Agathon, *p. n.* L. W. 526.
Blakeberied. 12340.
Broken harm. 9299.
Cankedort. T. ii. 1752.
Carrenare. Du. 1029.
Consite. C. D. 1238.
Cost. 1480.
Countour. 361.
Cuppes. To turnen c. 3926.
Cytherus, *pr. n.* F. iii. 137.
Douced. F. iii. 131.
Dulcarnon. T. iii. 933, 5.
Durense. C. D. 1199.
Eclympasteire, *pr. n.* Du. 167.
Farewell feldefare. R. 5510. T. iii. 863.
Fortenid crese. R. 4875.
Frape. T. iii. 411.
Gattothed. 470. 6185.
Gnoffe. 3188.
Hawebake. 4515.
Hermes Ballenus, *pr. n.* F. iii. 183.
Hugest and Collo. T. L. B. ii. p. 499.
Hyghen. F. iii. 1062.
Jack of Dover. 4345.
Kirked. R. 3137.
Limote. *pr. n.* F. iii. 184.
Louke. 4413.
Madrian. 13898.
Parodie. T. v. 1547.
Pavade. 3927.
Paysaunce. C. D. 1673.
Pell. F. iii. 220.
Popper. 3929.
Pouder marchant. 323.
Proserus, *pr. n.* F. iii. 138.
Radevore. L. W. 2341.
Raket. T. iv. 461.
Rewel bone. 13807.
Sered pokettes, or pottes. 16270.
Span-newe. T. iii. 1671.
Squaimous. 3337.
Temen. F. iii. 654.
Tidife. 10962.
Trippe. 7329.
Viretote. 3768
Vitremite. 14378.
Vounde stone. R. 7113.
Wades bote. 9298.
Whipul-tree. 2925.
Winder, Wintred. R. 1018, 20.
Zansis, *pr. n.* T. iv. 414.
Zedeories, *pr. n.* T. L. B. i. p. 485. b

LONDON:
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

A FINE IS INCURRED IF THIS BOOK IS NOT RETURNED TO THE LIBRARY ON OR BEFORE THE LAST DATE STAMPED BELOW.

AUG 12 1973 ILL

CANCELLED APR 1 1974

MAR 15 '74 H

CANCELLED APR 1 1974

STALL CANCELLED